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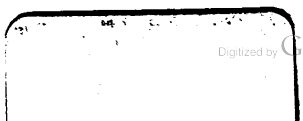
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The World's Great Sermons

VOLUME VI

H. W. BEECHER TO PUNSHON

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THE WORLD'S GREAT SERMONS

COMPILED BY

GRENVILLE KLEISER

Formerly of Yale Divinity School Faculty;
Author of "How to Speak
in Public," Etc.

With Assistance from Many of the Foremost
Living Preachers and Other Theologians

INTRODUCTION BY

LEWIS O. BRASTOW, D.D.

Professor Emeritus of Practical Theology
in Yale University

IN TEN VOLUMES

VOLUME VI—H. W. BEECHER TO PUNSHON

FUNK & WAGNALLS COMPANY
NEW YORK and LONDON

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HENRY WARD BEECHER

IMMORTALITY

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

HENRY WARD BEECHER, preacher, orator, lecturer, writer, editor, and reformer, was born at Litchfield, Connecticut, in 1813. He was by nature and training a great pulpit orator. Mr. Beecher kept himself in perfect physical condition for his work. He has described a course of vocal exercises which he pursued in the open air for a period of three years. "The drill I underwent," he says, "produced, not a rhetorical manner, but a flexible instrument, that accommodated itself readily to every kind of thought and every shape of feeling."

He had deep sympathy for all men, and this with his intense dramatic power often carried him into the wildest and most exalted flights of oratory. Phillips Brooks styled him the greatest preacher in America, and he is generally regarded as the most highly gifted of modern preachers. He was fearless, patriotic, clear-headed, witty, and self-sacrificing. Dr. Wilkinson calls him "the greatest pulpit orator the world ever saw." He died in 1887.

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H. W. BEECHER

1813—1887

IMMORTALITY[1]

If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men most miserable.—I Cor. xv., 19.

THIS is not the declaration of a universal principle: it is biographical and personal. And yet, there is in it a principle of prime importance. It is true that Paul and his compeers had sacrificed everything that was dear to man for the sake of Christ. Paul had given up the place that he held among his countrymen, and the things which surely awaited him. He had consented to be an exile. Loving Palestine and the memory of his fathers, as only a Jew could love, he found himself an outcast, and despised everywhere by his own people. And the catalog that he gives of the sufferings which he felt keenly; which perhaps would not have been felt by a man less susceptible than he, but which were no less keen in his case—that catalog shows how much he had given up for Christ. And if it should turn

[1] From "Plymouth Pulpit Sermons." By permission of the Congregational Sunday-School and Publishing Society.

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out that after all he had followed a mere fable, a myth; that Christ was but a man; that, dying, He had come to an end; that He stayed dead, and that there was no resurrection, no future, but only that past through which he waded, and that present in which he was suffering, then, surely, it would be true that of all men he was most miserable.

This is the biographical view; but it may be said of all men, in this respect, that no persons can so ill afford to lose faith of immortality as those who have had all their affections burnished, deepened and rendered sensitive by the power of Christianity. When Christianity has had the education of generation after generation, and has shaped the style of its manhood, and ordained the institutions by which its affections have been enlarged and purified; when, in short, generations of men have been legitimately the children of Christianity, to take away from them the faith of immortality would be a cruelty which could have no parallel in the amount of suffering which it would entail.

It is not necessarily true that men without a hope of Christianity would have no incitement to virtue—certainly not in the ordinary way in which it is put to us. Abstractly, it is said that virtue is its own reward—and it is. If there was enough of it to amount to anything, it would be a great, an exceeding great, reward; but where it is a spark; a

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germ; where it is struggling for its own existence; where it bears but a few ripe fruits, the reward is hardly worth the culture. If all that we get is what we have in this life, it is but little.

Many men are favorably organized and favorably situated; they have an unyearning content; things seem good enough for them; and they do not understand why it is that persons should desire immortality and glory —that is, at first. In general, I think there are few persons that live long in life who do not, sooner or later, come to a point in which they wake up to the consciousness of a need of this kind. It is not always true in the case of persons of refined moral and intellectual culture that they are conscious of needing a belief in immortality; but a belief in immortality is the unavoidable result and the indispensable requirement of all true manhood. When you look at growth, not in each particular case, but largely, as it develops itself in communities; when you consider it, not only in a single individual, but in whole communities, as they develop from childhood to manhood, or from barbarism through semi-civilization to civilization and refinement, the law of development is always away from animal life and its sustaining appetites and passions toward the moral and the intellectual. That is the direction in which unfolding takes place.

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The naturalist watches the insect, and studies all the stages through which it goes, till it becomes a perfect insect. We look at a seed, and see how it develops stem and leaf and blossom all the way through, till we find out what the plant is in its final and perfect condition. And in studying men to know what is the perfect condition of manhood, looking at them from the beginning to the end, which way does manhood lie, in the direction of the bodily appetites and senses, or in the other direction?

Men come into life perfect animals. There is very little that culture does in that direction, giving them a little more or a little less use of themselves, as the case may be. That which we mean when we speak of developing manhood in a child, is something more than the development of symmetry of form and power of physical organization. When we speak of the civilization and refinement of the race at large, development does not mean bodily power or bodily skill: it means reason; moral sense; imagination; profounder affection; subtler, purer, sweeter domestic relations. Manhood grows away from bodily conditions, without ever leaving them. The body becomes a socket, and the soul is a lamp in it. And if you look narrowly at what we mean by growth in mankind, whether it be applied to the individual or to the race, you will find that we mean an unfolding which takes a man

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away from the material toward that which is subtler, more spiritual, existing outside of the ordinary senses, tho acting from them, as something better than bone and muscle, nerve and tissue.

All development, then, is from the animal toward the spiritual and the invisible. This is the public sentiment of mankind even in the lower forms of society. What are considered heroic traits, the things which bring admiration to men, if narrowly examined will be found to be not the things which belong to men as brutes—tho these things may be employed by them as instruments. Even in the cases of such men as Samson and Hercules, who were rude, brute men, it was not their strength that drew admiration to them: it was their heroism; it was their patriotism; it was that which they did by their strength for their kind, and not for themselves. And in lower societies it is courage, it is self-devotion, it is the want of fear, it is the higher form of animal life, that attracts admiration. But as we develop out of barbarous into civilized conditions, we admire men, not because they can lift so much, or throw such heavy weights, or endure such hardships of body. Admiration on these accounts has its place; but higher than these is the power of thought, the power of planning, the power of executing, the power of living at one point so as to comprehend in the effects produced all cir-

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cuits of time in the future. Thought-power; emotion; moral sense; justice; equity in all its forms; higher manhood, and its branches, which stretch up into the atmosphere and reach nearest to the sun—these are something other than those qualities which develop earliest, and are lowest—nearest to the ground.

True manhood, then, has its ripeness in the higher faculties. Without disdaining the companionship of the body the manhood of man grows away from it—in another direction. There is not simply the ripening of the physical that is in man; but there is, by means of the physical, the ripening of the intellectual, the emotional, the moral, the esthetic life, as well as the whole spiritual nature.

When reason and moral sense are developed, there will inevitably spring up within a man an element the value of which consists in perpetuating things—in their continuance. It is spontaneous and universal for one to seek to perpetuate, to extend life. I do not mean by this that one wants to live a great while; but men are perpetually under the unconscious influence of this in their nature: the attempt to give form and permanence to that which is best in their manhood. We build, to be sure, primarily, to cover ourselves from the elements; but we very soon cease to build for that only: we not merely build for protection from cold and from wet, but we build for gratification. We build to gratify the sense

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of beauty, the sense of convenience, and the sense of love. And we go on beyond that: we build in order that we may send down to those who are to come after us a memorial of our embodied, incarnated thoughts. In other words, when men build, they seek, by incarnation, to render things permanent which have existed only as thoughts or transient emotions. There is a tendency to incarnate the fugitive elements in men, and give them permanence. And the element of continuing is one of the elements which belong to the higher manhood.

This throws light upon the material growths of society. Men strive to perpetuate thoughts and feelings which are evanescent unless they are born into matter. Men build things for duration. There is this unconscious following out of things to make them last; to give them long periods. And it opens up to men the sense of their augmented being. Largeness of being is indissolubly connected with extended time of being.

We admire the pyramids, not because they have been associated with so many histories, but because they have stood so many ages. We admire old trees, not because so many tribes have sat under them, nor because so many events have taken place beneath them, but simply because they have age with them. For there are mute, inexplicable feelings connected with the mere extension of time which belong to the higher development of manhood

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in us. Frangible things are of less value than things that are infrangible. Things that last are of more value, on the same plane, than their congeners are that do not last.

Who can equal the pictures which are painted on the panes of glass in our winter rooms? Where can you find a Lambineau, or any painter who can give a mountain scenery such as we have for nothing, every morning, when we wake up, and such as the sun outside, or the stove inside, destroys before ten o'clock? These pictures are not valued as are those which are painted on canvas, and which are not half so good; but the element of enduring is with the latter, while the element of evanescence is with the former. Tho the pictures on the pane are finer than those on the canvas, they lack the element of time, on which value so largely depends. The soul craves, hungers for, this quality of continuance as an element for measuring the value of things. This element of time is somewhat felt in the earlier conditions of humanity; but it grows with the development of men, and attaches itself to every part of human life.

I never saw a diamond that was so beautiful as are the dew-drops which I see on my lawn in summer. What is the difference between a dew-drop and a diamond? One goes in a moment; it flashes and dies; but the other endures; and its value consists in its

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endurance. There are hundreds of things which are as beautiful as a diamond in their moment; but the endurance of the diamond is measured by ages, and not by moments, and so carries on the value.

I do not draw these reasonings very close as yet—I do not desire to put too much emphasis upon them; but I think you will see that there is a drift in them, and that they will bear, at last, an important relation to this question of immortality. The element of manhood carries with it a very powerful sense of the value of existence. The desire to live is a blind instinct. A happy experience brings to this instinct many auxiliaries—the expectation of pleasure; the wish to complete unfinished things; the clinging affection to those that have excited love; and habits of enterprise.

Besides all these, is a development of the sense of value in simply being. We have said that in external matters the continuity of being is an element of value in the judgment which mankind at large have put upon things. We say that the same is true in respect to the inward existence—to manhood itself. The savage cares very little for life. He lives for to-day; and in every to-day he lives for the hour. Time is of the least importance to him. The barbarian differs from the savage in this: that he lives to-day for to-morrow, perhaps, but not for next year. The semi-civilized man

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lives for next year; but only for the year, or for years. The civilized man begins to live in the present for the future. And the Christian civilized man begins to live with a sense of the forever.

The extension of the sense of time goes on with the development of manhood in men. The sweet, the tender, the loving, the thoughtful, the intellectual, live not simply with a sense of life as a pleasure-bringer: there grows up in them, with their development toward manhood, an intrinsic sense of the value of being itself. The soul knows the cargo that it carries. It knows that that cargo is destined to immortality. As men are conscious of seeing more, of thinking more, and of feeling more; as thought becomes more precious; as emotion becomes deeper and more valuable; so men more and more feel that they cannot afford to have such things go to waste.

A man who takes in his hands a lump of mud and molds it to some pleasing form, cares but little when, dropping it, he sees it flatten on the ground. The man that grinds a crystal, and sees it broken, thinks of it for a moment, perhaps, with regret, but soon forgets it. No one, however, can see an organized thing, having its uses, and indicating exquisite skill and long experience, dashed to pieces without pain. But what is anything that is organized in life worth in comparison with the soul of a man? And if that soul be pure,

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and sweet, and deep, and noble, and active, and fruitful, who can, without a pang, look at it, and think that it must in an instant go to nothing, dissolving again as an icicle from a roof in the spring?

The feeling is not the fruit of mere reflection. It is instinctive. It is universal. Men do not cultivate it on purpose. They cannot help having it. No man of moral culture can regard human life as without immortality except with profound melancholy. No man that is susceptible to reflectiveness can bear to think of man's existence here without the bright background of another life.

The sense of the continuity of existence is grounded in men, and grows with their refinement and development and strength, and gives color to their life, and change to their opinions, it may be.

To men who have developed moral sense and intellectual culture, every element of value in life is made precious by some conscious or some unconscious element of time and continuance. It is the nature of our better faculties, in their better states, to place a man in such relations to everything that is most precious to him, that it gives him pleasure in the proportion in which it seems to be continuous and permanent, and gives him pain in the proportion in which it seems to be evanescent and perishing.

We are building a crystal character with

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much pain and self-denial; and it is to be built as bubbles are blown? What is finer in line than the bubble? What is more airy? Where are pictures more exquisite, where are colors more tender and rich and beautiful—and where is there anything that is born so near to its end as a bubble? Is the character which we are building with so much pain and suffering and patience, with so much burden of conscience, and with so much aspiration; is the character which we are forming in the invisible realm of the soul—is that but a bubble? Is that only a thin film which reflects the transient experiences of a life of joy or sadness, and goes out? Then, what is life worth? If I had no function but that of a pismire; if I were a beetle that rolled in the dirt, and yet were clothed with a power of reflection, and knew what the depths of feeling were, what intense emotions were, and what struggling and yearning were; if, being a mere insect, I had all the works in the intellect of man, and all the aspiration that goes with spiritual elements; if I were but a leaf-cutter, a bug in the soil, or about the same thing on a little larger pattern, and were to be blotted out at death, what would be the use of my trying to grow? If by refining and whetting our faculties they become more susceptible to pleasure, they become equally susceptible to pain. And in this great, grinding, groaning world, pain is altogether out of propor-

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tion to pleasure, in an exquisite temperament. The finer men are the better they are, if they are forever; but the finer men are the worse they are if they are only for a day; for they have a disproportion of sensibility to suffering over and above present remuneration and conscious enjoyment.

Men feel an intrinsic sense of personality and personal worth. They have self-esteem, which is the only central, spinal, manly faculty which gives them a sense of personal identity and personal value, and which is an auxiliary counselor of conscience itself. This sense of "I" demands something more than a short round of physical life, to be followed by extinction. I am too valuble to perish so; and every step in life has been training me in the direction of greater value. As men grow broader, and stronger, and finer, and deeper, and sweeter, they become more and more conscious of the intrinsic value of their being, and demand for themselves a harbor in order that they may not be wrecked or foundered.

Nor do I think that there can be found, to any considerable extent, or developed, friendships which shall not, with all their strength and with all their depth, resist the conception of dissolution or of fading. For friendships are not casual likings. Friendships are not merely the interchange of good nature, and the ordinary friendly offices of good neighbor-

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hood. These things are friendly, but they do not comprise friendship. Two trees may grow contiguous, and throw their shade one over upon the other; but they never touch nor help each other; and their roots quarrel for the food that is in the ground. But two vines, growing over a porch, meet each other, and twine together, and twist fiber into fiber and stem into stem, and take shape from each other, and are substantially one. And such are friendships. Now, one cannot have his life divided as two trees are. He cannot enter into partnership with others, and be conscious that that partnership shall be but for an hour or for a moment. The sanctity, the honor, the exaltation, the exhilaration of a true and manly friendship lies in the thought of its continuance. There can be no deep friendship which does not sign for endlessness.

Still more is this true of love: not that rudimentary form which seeks lower fruitions, and which is often but little more than passion done up in friendship; but that higher love which manifests itself chiefly in the spiritual realm; that love which is not forever asking, but forever giving; that love which is not centripetal, but centrifugal; that love which, like a mother's, gives for the pleasure of giving; that love which reveres; that love which looks up; that love which seeks to exalt its object by doing what is pleasant and noble; that love which demands continuance, eleva-

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tion, yea, grandeur, it may be, in the thing beloved. How little will such a love tolerate the idea of evanescence, the dread of discontinuing! Can such a love do other than yearn for immortality?

So then, if you take the thought, it is this: that if men develop, they come under the dominion of higher faculties; and that it is then their nature to stamp on all their occupations, on their self-consciousness, on the whole development of their affections, the need of continuance, of immortality. There are, therefore, in the growth of the mind itself, as a department of nature, these elements of conviction. The mind cannot do other than develop in itself a faith in immortality.

It may be said, and it sometimes is said, that the origin of the belief of existence out of the body, of spiritual existence, may be traced directly back to the dreams of the barbarous ages, to a period when men were so low that they did not recognize the difference between a dream and a waking reality—to a time when persons dreamed that their friends came back to them, and waked up and believed that they had been back. Thus, it is said, began the thought of continuity of life after death. For my part, I do not care how it began. The question is not how it started; the question is, What becomes of it now that it has begun? No matter how it was born, what purpose is it to serve? What is it

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adapted to do? How is it calculated to influence our manhood? In what way shall it be employed to lead man God-ward? How shall it be used to work most effectually in the direction of civilization and refinement? It so fits every human soul, that men will not let it go. They cling to it with their inward and best nature.

All experiences of human life fall in with this tendency of the mind. When men look out upon the incoherent and unmannerly course of things in time, I can understand how, believing in the future, they may live with patience; but in every age of the world where the clear light of immortality has not shone, men have mostly been discouraged, have been generally indifferent to public superiority, and have taken no interest in things done for the sake of humanity. Such is the worthlessness of time, to the thought of those that have no faith in the future, that they have cared for little except present physical enjoyment. And on the whole, when such men crowd together, and tribes take the place of individuals, or kingdoms take the place of tribes, with all their complications in the working out of their clashing results, they look upon human life, and feel that the world is not worth living for. Things are so uncertain, products are in such disproportion to their causes, or to the expectations of men, that if there is to be nothing but this life,

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then, "Eat, drink and be merry, for to-morrow we die," is not only the philosophy of the epicurean, but the temptation of the most wise and frugal and self-restraining. The nature of life to a man who is highly educated requires that he should believe in the continuity and existence of the myriads that he sees in such a state of quarreling infelicity and wretchedness in this mortal condition. The utter futility of the best part of man's life here, the total bankruptcy of his best endeavors, the worthlessness of his career from the material standpoint, makes it imperative on him to believe that he shall have another chance in another sphere of being.

Is it enough to have been born, to have lived till one is of age, and then to be launched out to founder in mid-ocean? Is it enough that one should devote the best part of his life to the building of a character, only to see the fabric which he has constructed tumbling about his ears? Is this enough in the day of distress and bankruptcy? Is it enough, in the time when a man's ambitions are crossed, and the sky is dark, and he can do nothing but stand amid the ruins of his hopes and expectations? Is not the thought revolting to every instinct of manhood?

But if there is another life; if all our labor has this value in it, that while a man is building up his outward estate, if it is certain that

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the man himself will live, no matter what becomes of his property and his reputation, then all his endeavors have endless scope, and his life becomes redeemable and radiant.

Nowhere else so much as in the realm of grief, I think, is the question of immortality interpreted. It is true that the first shock of overwhelming grief sometimes drives faith out of the mind; that it sometimes staggers the reason; that it sometimes dispossesses the moral sense of its accustomed health, and leaves the mind in weakness. As in a fever, the natural eye can see nothing aright, and things then seem to dance in the air, and take on grotesque forms, so persons who are bewildered with first sorrow oftentimes see things amiss. And there is no skepticism which is so deep and pulseless as that which often takes possession of people in the first great overmastering surprize and shock of grief. But after one had recovered a little, and the nerve has come to its wonted sensibility, the faith of immortality returns. There is that in every soul which knows what is the strength of life and noble deeds and aspirations; and therefore there is that in every soul which calls out for immortality.

I cannot believe, I will not believe, when I walk upon the clod, that it is my mother that I tread under foot. She that bore me, she that every year more than gave birth to me out of her own soul's aspiration—I will not

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believe that she is dust. Everything within me revolts at the idea.

Do two persons walk together in an inseparable union, mingling their brightest and noblest thoughts, striving for the highest ideal, like flowers that grow by the side of each other, breathing fragrance each on the other, and shining in beauty each for the other; are two persons thus twined together and bound together for life, until in some dark hour one is called and the other is left; and does the bleeding heart go down to the grave and say, "I return dust to dust?" Was that dust, then? That trustworthiness; that fidelity; that frankness of truth; that transparent honesty; that heroism of love; that disinterestedness; that fitness and exquisiteness of taste; that fervor of love; that aspiration; that power of conviction; that piety; that great hope in God—were all these elements in the soul of the companion that had disappeared but just so many phenomena of matter? And have they already collapsed and gone, like last year's flowers struck with frost, back again to the mold? In the grief of such an hour one will not let go the hope of resurrection.

Can a parent go back from the grave where he has laid his children and say, "I shall never see them more?" Even as far back as the dim twilight in which David lived, he said, "Thou shalt not come to me, but I shall go to thee"; and is it possible for the parental

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heart to stand in our day by the side of the grave, where the children have been put out of sight, and say, "They neither shall come to me, nor shall I go to them; they are blossoms that have fallen; they never shall bring forth fruit"? It is unnatural. It is hideous. Everything that is in man, every instinct that is best in human nature repels it.

Is not the human soul, then, itself a witness of the truth of immortality?

Men say, "You cannot prove it. There is no argument that can establish it. No man has seen it, and it cannot be substantiated. It is not a ponderable thing." Men demand that we should prove things by straight lines; by the alembic; by scales; by analysis; but I say that there is much in nature which is so high that scales and rules and alembics cannot touch it. And is not man's soul a part of nature—the highest part?

I hold that even the materialist may believe in immortality. For, altho there is a gross kind of materialism, there may be a materialism which is consistent with a belief in immortality. Because, on the supposition that the mind is matter, it must be admitted that it is incomparably superior to any other matter that we are familiar with. Is there any matter outside of mind that produces thought and feeling such as we see evolved among men? If it be the theory that mind is matter, and if the matter of which the mind is composed be

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so far above all other kinds of matter in its fruit and product, is it not on so high a plane as presumably not to be subject to the lower and coarser forms of examination and test? I know no reason why cerebral matter may not be eternal. I do not belong to those who take that material view of the mind; but I do not know that immortality is inconsistent even with materialism; and how much more easily may it be reconciled to the view of those who believe in the ineffable character, the imponderable, spiritual condition, of the soul!

In addition to these arguments, when we come to the Word of God, we hear the voices of those who sang and chanted in the past. We hear the disciple crying out, "Christ is risen!" and we hear the apostle preaching this new truth to mankind. So that now the heavens have been broken open. The secrets of the other life have been revealed. And is there not a presumption, following the line of a man's best manhood, that immortality is true? Does one need to go into a rigorous logical examination of this subject? Should one stand jealously at the side of the sepulcher of Christ, and examine this matter as a policeman examines the certificate of a suspected man, or as one takes money from the hand of a cheating usurer and goes out to see if it is gold? Shall one stand at the door from which issue all the hopes that belong to the best part of man; shall one look upon that which is de-

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manded by the very nature of his better manhood, and question it coldly, and tread it under foot?

What do we gain by obliterating this fair vision? Why should not heaven continue to shine on? Why should we not look into it, and believe that it is, and that it waits for us? Have we not the foretokens of it? Is not the analogy of the faculties one that leads us to believe that there is some such thing? Does not the nature of every man that is high and noble revolt at flesh and matter? Are they not rising toward the ineffable? Are not all the intuitions and affections of men such that, the better they are, the more they have of things that are manly, the more indispensable it is that they should have endurance, etherealization, perpetuation?

The heart and flesh cry out for God. They cry out for immortality. Not only does the Spirit from the heavenly land say to every toiling, yearning, anxious soul, "Come up hither," but every soul that is striving upward has in it, if not a vocalized aspiration, yet a mute yearning—a voice of the soul—that cries out for heaven,

"As the hart panteth after the waterbrooks, so panteth my soul after thee, O God!"

On such a day as this, then, in a community of moral feeling, how blest is the truth which comes to us, that we are not as the

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beasts that die; that we are as the gods that live! That for which we were made is immortality; and our journey is rough, straight, sharp, burdensome, with many tears. Our journey is not to the grave. I am not growing into old age to be blind, and to be deaf, and to be rheumatic, and to shrink a miserable cripple into the corner, shaking and tottering and forgetting all that I ever knew. The best part of me is untouched. The soul; the reason; the moral sense; the power to think; the power to will; the power to love; the power to admire purity, and to reach out after it—that is not touched by time, tho its instrument and means of outer demonstration be corroded and failing. No physical weakness touches the soul. Only the body is touched by sickness. And shake that down! Shake it down! Let it go! For, as the chrysalis bursts open, and the covering which confines the perfected insect is dropt, that he may come out into brightness of form and largeness of life, so this body is but a chrysalis; and when we break through it, we rise on wings by the attraction of God, and by the propulsion of our own inevitable desire and need, and are forever with the Lord.

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CHAPIN

NICODEMUS: THE SEEKER AFTER RELIGION

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

EDWIN HUBBELL CHAPIN, Universalist divine, was born in Union Village, Washington County, N. Y., in 1814. He began his very successful ministry 1837 in Richmond, Va., subsequently he preached in Charlestown, Mass., from which place he was called to the pastorate of the Fourth Universalist Church in New York City. His preaching attracted large congregations, and he was generally regarded as one of the greatest preachers of this country. He spoke from a manuscript, using no gesture, but his magnetic personality never failed to drive his message home. He published numerous volumes of sermons and lectures. He died in 1880.

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CHAPIN

1814—1880

NICODEMUS: THE SEEKER AFTER RELIGION

There was a man of the Pharisees, named Nicodemus, a ruler of the Jews: The same came to Jesus by night. —John iii., 1, 2.

ALTHO we have but few glimpses of Nicodemus in the gospels, he is a personage of peculiar interest. A Pharisee, and a member of the great Jewish senate, or Sanhedrin, he shows us that the influence of Christ was not limited to the poor and the obscure; but that, while His words and works awoke enmity and fear among the higher classes, they struck, in the breasts of some of these, a holier chord.

It may not be certain that Nicodemus ever openly confest Christ; yet, in this chapter, he appears in the attitude of a disciple, and we find him defending Jesus before the Sanhedrin, and assisting at His burial. Still, unless the last-mentioned act be considered as such, we do not discover, in his conduct, that public and decisive acknowledgment which the Savior required; we do not behold the frank avowal of Peter, or the intrepidity of Paul.

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There is an air of caution and of timidity about him. He carefully feels the ground of innovation, before he lets go the establishment; and, indeed, he appears to have taken no step by which he forfeited his caste or his office. It is difficult, too, to discover the precise purpose of this visit to Jesus. Perhaps he sought the interview from mixed motives. A religious earnestness, kindled by the teachings and the character of Christ, may have blended with speculative curiosity, and even with the throbbings of political ambition. His coming by night, too, may have indicated timidity, or he may have chosen that season as the best time for quiet and uninterrupted discourse. But, whatever may have been his motives, the position in which we find him shows, I repeat, that the power of Christ's ministry was felt, not only by the excitable multitude, but by the more thoughtful and devout of the Jewish people.

Nicodemus, however, presents a peculiar interest, not only because he exhibits the influence of Jesus upon the higher orders of his nation, but because he appears as a seeker after religion, and as one personally interested in its vital truths. His interview with the Savior gives occasion for one of the most important passages in the New Testament. The conversation of Christ, in this instance, is not uttered in general principles and accommodated to the multitude, but it is directed to

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an intelligent and inquiring spirit, in the calm privacy of the night-time laying bare its very depths, and craving the application of religion to its own peculiar wants. To be sure, Nicodemus did not profess this want, but commenced the conversation with the language of respect, and with suggestion of more general inquiry. But He who "knew what was in man," had already penetrated the folds of the ruler's breast, and saw the real need that had sent him; so, putting by all compliments, and all secondary issues, He struck at once the conscious chord that throbbed there, and exclaimed: "Verily, verily, I say unto thee, except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God!" These words must have filled Nicodemus with surprize, both from their sudden heart-searchingness, and as addressing to him a term which was usually applied to men of very different condition. For the phrase, "new birth," was a customary one to express the change through which the Gentile passed in becoming a Jew. But it was indeed a strange doctrine that he, a son of Abraham, a Pharisee, a ruler, must be born again, before he could be fit for the Messiah's kingdom. Therefore, really or affectedly, he misunderstood the Savior's words, and gave to a phrase, plain enough when applied to a heathen, the most gross and literal interpretation. But Christ reiterated the solemn truth assuring him that an inward change, and an

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outward profession, a regeneration of the affections and the will, and a renunciation of pride and fear, by the symbol of baptism—a new birth of water and of the Spirit—was essential to true discipleship. And thus, stripping away all the reliances of formal righteousness, and all the supports of birth and position, in reply to the earnest question of Nicodemus: "How can these things be?" the great Teacher proceeded to utter some of the sublimest doctrines of the gospel.

As I have already said, whether Nicodemus became an avowed follower of Jesus, or not, is uncertain; but we know that the truths which he then heard are of everlasting importance, have a personal application to every man, and appeal to wants in our own souls, which are as real and as deep as those of the ruler of old.

But while thus Nicodemus exhibits a need of our common humanity, he especially represents a class who may be called "seekers after religion," either as being unsettled and inquiring in their spirits, or as resting upon something which is not religion, but only, perhaps, a tendency toward it—they are seekers after it, as not having actually found it. In other words, for this class, religion has its meaning and its pressure; they think about it, and they feel its claims, yet they do not thoroughly and mentally know it; or, like Nicodemus, they rest upon some substitute.

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Some of these positions I propose now to illustrate.

I observe, then, in the first place, that some seek religion in rituals and sacraments. The tendency of the human mind, as to matters of faith and devotion, has always been to complicate rather than to simplify, and to associate these with set forms and symbols. In all ages, men have shrunk from naked communion with God, from the solitude of an intense spirituality, and have conducted transactions with the Invisible, through the mediation of ceremony. But that which, at first, was an expression of the individual soul, has grown into a fixed and consecrated rite. Gestures and modes of worship, suggested by the occasion, have been repeated in usage, and grown venerable with age, until they have become identified with religion itself. They have been exalted into mystic vehicles of grace, have been considered as possessing virtue in themselves, and as constituting an awful paraphernalia, through which, alone, God will deign to communicate with man, and through which man may even propitiate and move God. Christianity has not escaped this tendency; and, even now, there are many with whom the sacraments are something more than expressive signs and holy suggestions, and with whom the position of an altar, the shape of a vestment, and the form of a church are among the essentials of religion. With

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such, baptism speaks, not merely to the eye of an inward washing, but it is of itself a regenerative process. In their view, the communion bread is not simply a representation of the broken body of the Redeemer; but is itself so sacred, so identical with that body, that they must receive it by a special posture, and upon a particular part of the hand. As a matter of course, to such, religion must appear eminently conservative and retrospective; the genius of the established and the past, rather than of the reformatory and the future. Cherishing the minutest fibers of these ancient rites, they chiefly venerate the men who authenticate them, and the soil out of which they grow. With them, the fluent spirit of religion became organized and fixt into a form, with fast-days and feast-days, with miter and cassock, and a lineal priesthood, ages ago.

It cannot be said that this method is entirely unfounded. It has its justification in human nature, if not elsewhere. There are those who can find peace only in the arms of an hereditary faith: who can feel the inspiration of worship only among forms that have kindled worship in others for a thousand years: with whose earliest thoughts and dearest memories is entwined a ritual and an established church, so that personal affection and household sanctity, as well as religious feeling, demand that every great act of life—of joy or sorrow—should be consecrated, by the famil-

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iar sacrament. For that church, too, their fathers have died in darker times, and beneath its chancels, sainted mothers molder into dust. All, too, that can exalt the ideal, or wake the pulses of eloquent emotion, is connected with such a church. To them it opens a traditional perspective, the grandest in all history. Behind its altars, sweep the vestments of centuries of priests, and rises the incense of centuries of prayer. In its stony niches, stand rows of saints, who have made human life sublime, and who, through all the passing ages, look down upon the turmoil of that life with the calm beatitude of heaven; while its flushed windows still keep the blood-stain of its own martyrs, plashed against it ere yet it had become an anchored fact, and while it tossed upon the stormy waves of persecution. I can understand, then, how an imaginative and reverential mind can find the truest religious life only in connection with ritual and sacrament.

I can understand, moreover, the reaction in this direction, which is taking place at the present day.

It is the retreat of the religious sentiments from the despotism of an imperious reason. It is the counter-protest of loyal affections against what is deemed an anarchical tendency. It is the clinging of men's sympathies to the concrete, alarmed by the irreverent and analytic methods of science. It is the retire-

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ment of faith and devotion to those cloistered sanctities that shut out the noise of the populace, and the diversions of the street. It is the reluctance of taste and imagination at our new and varnished Protestantism, with its bare walls, its cold services, and its angular churches, of which one wing, perchance, rests upon a market, and the other upon a dram-shop. Especially would I not deny the profound spiritual life, the self-sacrifice, and the beautiful charities which have consisted at all times, and which consist in the present time, with this ritual and sacramental form of religion.

But when men claim that this alone is the genuine form—that these are essentials of the only true Church—then I deny that claim. If it fills some wants of our nature, it repudiates others equally authentic. If one class of minds find peace only under its consecrated shadows, others find no satisfaction but in the discipline of a spontaneous devotion, and the exercise of an individual reason. If it suffices for men like Borromeo or Newman, it does not suffice for men like George Fox or Channing; and the religion of these is as evident, in their simple spirituality, as those in their mystic symbolism. When it sneers at the Puritan, then I must vindicate that rugged independence of soul, that faithfulness of the individual conscience, that sense of the divine sovereignty, which could kneel at no man's

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altar, and to God alone; which sacrificed all things for the right, but yielded not a hair to the wrong; which could find no medicine for the spirit in sacraments, but only in the solitude of the inner life; and which has, under God, wrought out this noble consummation of modern times, whereby others may plant their vine of ritual under the broad heaven of toleration, and have liberty to sneer. When the ritualist deprecates the ultraism and irreverence of the anti-formalist, I must urge the tendency of his own principles to mummery and absolutism. And, finally, when he falls back upon tradition, I must fall back upon the Bible. The spirit of the New Testament is not that of rituals or sacraments; and the universal sentiments of the Old are not. The prophet Isaiah, who exclaims: "Bring no more vain oblations; incense is an abomination unto me; your new moons, and your appointed feasts, my soul hateth. . . . Wash you, make you clean . . . cease to do evil, learn to do well!" joins with the apostle, who says that Christ "blotted out the handwriting of ordinances . . . nailing it to his cross," and that no man should judge us in meat or drink, or times, or seasons. And surely, there is no argument for forms or places in those Divine Words, which declare that "God is a Spirit, and they who worship him, must worship him in spirit and in truth."

We cannot deny, then, that pure religion

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may consist with rituals and sacraments; we cannot deny that it may exist without these. But I insist upon this point: that the sacrament, the ritual, is not, itself, religion. It may be a beautiful sign—it may be a quick suggestion—it may be a medium of spiritual influence; but, alone, it cannot take the place of inward, personal piety, of right affections and an obedient will. No punctilious form can stand substitute for a vigilant conscience; no posture of devotion can supply the place of living deeds; no ascetic mortification can atone for guilt; no auricular confession can speak, instead of the breathings of repentance, in the ear of God, and out from the depths of the solitary soul. He who relies upon these forms, and finds sanctity only in them, may be sincere, may be serious about religion, but as yet he is only a seeker; and, speaking to his heart with all-penetrating meaning, comes to him the decree: "Ye must be born again."

Again; there is a class who seek religion in philosophy. They believe in God by a course of reasoning. They believe in immortality, because it is a conclusion riveted in their minds by the iron links of induction. They pray, or not, according as it seems logical to do so. They would be good, because goodness is useful.

But every proposition upon which they act, must first be strained through the alembic of the intellect, and must stand out in the clear

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definition of science. They verify and build up their religion with callipers and dissecting-knife. It is a system of digestion and pneumatology. They find an organ for veneration, and another for conscientiousness, and therefore conclude that religion has a legitimate place in the harmony of human character. But all must be calm and balanced. They dare not trust the feelings and give but little scope to enthusiasm. Sometimes, indeed, they rise to eloquence in expatiating upon the truths of natural theology, and of "the elder Scripture"; tho they believe in Christ also, because He seems well authenticated as an historical fact. In short, such men are religious like Cicero, or Seneca, with some modification from modern science and from the Sermon on the Mount.

Now there is a close alliance between true philosophy and true religion. That the New Testament is eminently free from fanaticism, and makes no appeal to mere credulity, any one will see who examines. That it is rational and sober, constitutes one of its great internal evidences. A Christian philosopher is no anomaly, but a beautiful expression of the essential harmony of all truth. Knowledge and piety burn and brighten with an undivided flame. Revelation and science are continually interpreting one another, while every day the material universe is unfolding a more spiritual significance, and indicating its sub-

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servience to a spiritual end. But, after all, in order to be religious, it is not necessary that a man should be a philosopher, and it is certain that often he is a philosopher without being religious. Religion and philosophy may coalesce, but they are two different spheres. Philosophy is out-looking and speculative; religion is inner and vital. In the scheme of philosophy, religion is reasoned out as a consequence, and adopted as an appendage to character. In the true scheme, it is the central germ of our being, the controlling force of life. The religion of philosophy consists of right views of things, and a prudential schooling of the passions. True religion consists in a right state of the affections, and a renunciation of self. In the one case, religion may "play round the head, but come not near the heart"; in the other, it breaks up the great deep of conscience, and pours an intense light upon the springs of motive. Philosophy contains the idea of intellectual rectitude; religion, of moral obedience. Philosophy speaks of virtue; religion, of holiness. Philosophy rests upon development; religion requires regeneration. In short, we make an every-day distinction between the two which is far more significant than any verbal contrast. It is the one, rather than the other, that we apply, in the profounder experiences of our moral nature, in the consciousness of sin and in the overwhelming calamities of life. The one pours

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a purifying, healing, uplifting power into the homes of human suffering, and into the hearts of the ignorant and the poor, that the other has not to bestow. Philosophy is well under all circumstances; but it is not the most inner element of our humanity. Religion, in its humility, penitence, and faith—at the foot of the cross, and by the open sepulcher—rejoices in a direct and practical vision, to which philosophy, with its encyclopedia and telescope, cannot attain.

Under this head, too, may be ranked a class of men who, tho they may not be exactly philosophers, fall into the same conception of religion, as a matter of the intellect—as the possession of correct views—rather than a profound moral life. They estimate men according to what they believe, and attribute the same sanctity to the creed that others attribute to the ritual. And as religion, in their conception of it, consists in a series of correct opinions, the great work should be an endeavor to make men think right. So the pulpit should be an arsenal of controversial forces, incessantly playing upon the ramparts of dogmatic error, with the artillery of dogmatic truth, and forever hammering the same doctrinal monotony upon the anvils of logic and of textual interpretation. They are satisfied if some favorite tenet is proved to a demonstration, and go forth rejoicing in the superiority of their "views," without asking

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if saving love has melted and transfigured their own hearts, or whether personal sin may not canker in their souls, if hereditary guilt is not there. Now, it is true that great principles lie at the foundation of all practical life, and the more elevated and clear our views, the more effectual are the motives to holiness and love.

But it matters little to what pole of doctrine the intellect swings, if the heart hangs unpenetrated and untouched. It matters little to what opinions in theology the pulpit has made converts, if all its mighty truths have not heaved the moral nature of the hearer—if it has not shot into the individual soul, like an arrow, the keen conviction: "I must be born again!"

Once again: there are those who seek religion in a routine of outward and commendable deeds—in mere morality. With such, the great sum of life is to be sober, chaste, humane; laying particular stress upon the business virtues, honesty, industry, and prudence. In their idea, that man is a religious man who is an upright dealer, an orderly citizen, a good neighbor, and a charitable giver. To be religious, means to do good, to keep your promises, and mind your own business. They tell us that benevolence is the richest offering, and that the truest worship is in the workshop and the field—that a man prays when he drives a nail or plows a furrow,

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and that he expresses the best thanksgiving when he enjoys what he has got, and is content if he gets no more.

Now, the world is not so bad that there is not a good deal of this kind of religion in it. It would be unjust to deny that many golden threads of integrity wind through the fabric of labor; that there is a strong nerve of rectitude holding together the transactions of daily life, and a wealth of spontaneous kindness enriching its darker and more terrible scenes.

But, after all, these easy sympathies, and these prudential virtues, lack the radicalness of true religion. Religion cannot exist without morality; but there is a formal morality which exists without religion. I say, a formal morality; for essential morality and essential religion are as inseparable as the sap and the fruit. Nor is morality a mere segment of religion. It is one-half of it. Nay, when we get at absolute definitions, the two terms may be used interchangeably; for then we consider religion presenting its earthly and social phase, and we consider morality with its axis turned heavenward. But, in the case of these outside virtues, which are so common, we behold only one-half of religion, and that is its earthly and social form; and even this lacks the root and sanction of true morality. For the difference between the morality of a religious man and that of another, consists in this: with the one, morality bears the sanction

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of an absolute law, and God is at its center. It is wrought out by discipline, and maintained at all cost. With the other, it is an affair of temperament, and education, and social position. He has received it as a custom, and adopted it as a policy; or he acts upon it as an impulse. With the one, it is a matter of profit and loss, or a fitful whim of sentiment. With the other, it is the voice of a divine oracle within, that must be obeyed; it is the consecrated method of duty, and the inspiration of prayer. Now, to say that it makes no difference about the motive of an act, so long as the act itself is good, indicates that very lack of right feeling and right perception, which confounds the formal morality of the world with religion. For, in the distinctions of the Christian system, the motive makes the deed good or bad; makes the two mites richer than all the rest of the money in the treasury; makes the man who hates his brother a murderer. The good action may bless others, but if I do not perform it from a right motive, it does not bless me; and the essential peculiarity of religion is, that it regards inward development, individual purity, personal holiness—so that one essential excellence of the good deed consists in its effect upon the agent—consists in the sinews which it lends to his moral power, and the quantity it adds to his spiritual life. When, from a right motive, with effort and sacrifice,

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I help a weak and poor man, I enrich my individual and spiritual being. If I bestow from a mere gush of feeling, I receive no permanent spiritual benefit; if from a bad motive, I impoverish my own heart. Acts, then, which appear the same thing in form, differ widely, considered in the religious bearings. There is the morality of impulse, the morality of selfishness, and the morality of principle, or religious morality. The motive of the first-named, we obey instantaneously, and it may do good, just as we draw our hands from the flame, and thereby obey a law of our physical nature, tho we act without any consideration of that law. A great deal of the morality in the world is of this kind.

It may do good, but has no reference to the law of rectitude. It is impulsive, and, therefore, does not indicate a steadfast virtue, or a deep religious life. For the very impulsiveness that leads to the gratification of the sympathies, leads to the gratification of the appetites, and thus we often find generous and benevolent characteristics mixed with vicious conduct. Then, as I have said, there is the morality of selfishness. In this instance, I may perform many good actions from sheer calculation of material profit. I may be benevolent, because it will increase my reputation for philanthropy. I may be honest, because "honesty is the best policy." But is this the highest, the religious sanction of morality?

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No; the morality of the religious man is the morality of principle. The motive in his case is not "I will," or "I had better," but "I ought." He recognizes morality as a law, impersonal, overmastering the dictates of mere self, and holding all impulses in subservience to the highest good. The morality of impulse is uncertain. The morality of policy is mean and selfish. The morality of religion is loyal, disinterested, self-sacrificing. It acts from faith in God, and with reference to God.

But another trait separates the religious from the merely formal moralist. It consists in the fact that with him, "morality," as we commonly employ the term, is not all. Piety has its place. His affections not only flow earthward, but turn heavenward. He not only loves his neighbor as himself, but he loves the Lord, his God. He not only visits the widows and the fatherless in their affliction, but he keeps himself unspotted from the world. With him, toil is prayer, and contentment is thanksgiving, because he infuses into them a spirit of devotion, which he has cultivated by more solitary and special acts. With him it is a good thing to live honestly, industriously, soberly; but all life is not outward, is not in traffic and labor, and meat and drink. There is an inward world, to which his eyes are often introverted—a world of spiritual experience, of great realities, and everlasting

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sanctions—a world behind the veil—a holy of holies in his soul, where rests the Shekinah of God's more immediate presence; yea, where he meets God face to face. And it is this that directs his public conduct. The orderly and beautiful method of his life is not the huddled chance-work of good impulses, is not the arithmetic of selfishness; but it is a serene and steady plan of being projected from the communion of the oratory, and the meditation of the closet.

Again, I say, let us not depreciate morality. Let us condemn that ostentatious piety which lifts up holy hands to God, but never stretches them out to help man; which anoints its head with the oil of sanctity, but will not defile its robes with the blood of the abused, or the contact of the guilty; which is loud in profession and poor in performance; which makes long prayers, but devours widow's houses. Let us condemn this, but remember that this is not real religion, only its form; as often, the kind deed, the honest method, is not true morality, only its form. Of both these departments of action let it be said: that these we have done, and not left the other undone. Let us recognize the perfect harmony, nay, the identity of religion and morality, in that One who came from the solitary conflict of the desert, to go about doing good, and who descended, from the night prayer on the mountain, to walk and calm the troubled waves of the sea.

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But those who rest in a mere routine of kind and prudential deeds need the deeper life and the inner perception which detects the meaning and gives the sanction to those deeds. Such need the vital germ of morality—the changed heart, the new birth.

And as I have spoken of a subordinate yet somewhat distinct class who may be ranked under the general head of seekers after religion in philosophy, let me here briefly allude to some with whom religion is a matter of mere sentiment and good feeling. Such are easily moved by the great doctrines of the New Testament. They are affected by the sermon; they have gushes of devout emotion during the prayer. But with them, religion is not a deep and steady pulse of divine life. Prayer is not a protracted aspiration—is not a habit. They feel well towards God, because they consider Him a good-natured, complacent being; but they do not meditate upon the majesty of His nature, upon His justice, and His holiness.

From the doctrine of immortality they draw consolation, but not sanctity. They regard it as a good time coming, but it furnishes them with no personal and stringent applications for the present. They need a more solemn and penetrating vision; a profounder experience in the soul. They need to be born again.

Then, again, there are those who may be called amateurs in religion. That is they are

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curious about religious things. They like to speculate about it, to argue upon its doctrines and to broach or examine new theories. They go about from sect to sect, and from church to church, tasting what is novel in the reasoning, or pleasing in the manner of the preacher; in one place to-day to hear an orator; in another to-morrow to hear a latter-day saint; it is all the same thing to them. All they want with religion is entertainment and excitement. They are Athenians, ever seeking some new thing. They smack at a fresh heresy as if they were opening a box of figs, and are as delighted with a controversy, as a boy with a sham-fight. They have no fixt place in the Church universal. They are liberalists, without any serious convictions, and cosmopolites without any home affections. In fact, to them religion is a sham-fight—a matter of spectacle and zest—not a personal interest, or an inward life. They would seek Jesus by night, because they hope to learn something wonderful or new, and would be started to hear His solemn words tingling in their hearts: "Ye must be born again!"

Nay, my friends, would not these solemn words startle many of us? It may be, we have never made any inquiry concerning religion—have never even come to Jesus, as it were, by night. Such, with their barks of being drifting down the stream of time, have never guessed the meaning of their voyage, or

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reckoned their course; nay, perhaps they live as tho religion were a fable, as tho earth were our permanent abiding-place, and heaven a dream. If such there are, they have not even listened to the Savior's words. But there are others among us perhaps, who are interested in the subject of religion, who are in some way or another engaged in it; but who are restless seekers after it, rather than actual possessors of it; who are resting upon insufficient substitutes for it. And I ask, would not these words breaking forth from the lips of Jesus, startle us in our ritualism, our philosophy, our outside morality, our sentimentalism, or our mere curiosity? And do they not speak to us? Are they not as true now as when they struck upon the shivering ear of Nicodemus? Do they not make us feel as intensely our obligation and our religious wants, as he might have felt there, with the wind flitting by him as tho the Holy Spirit were touching him with its appeal, and with the calm gaze of the Savior looking into his heart? Do they not demand of us, resting here awhile from the cares and labors of the world, something more than mere conformity, or intellectual belief, or formal deeds? Do they not demand a new and better spirit, a personal apprehension of the religious life, a breaking up and regeneration of our moral nature, a change of heart?

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STANLEY

IN MEMORIAM—THOMAS CARLYLE

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

ARTHUR PENRHYN STANLEY, the English scholar and divine, was born 1815 at Alderley, of which his father was rector. He was educated under Dr. Arnold at Rugby and in 1834 began a brilliant career at Oxford. Having been ordained priest in 1843 he was made Canon of Canterbury in 1851 and Dean of Westminster in 1864. At this date began his career as an ethical preacher. His pulpit became the means of reconciling many to the English Church because of its broad and sympathetic feeling of Christian brotherhood. All of his discourses are marked by a refined literary culture and a catholicity of spirit. Stanley's most famous sermons are those in which he celebrates the life and work of many illustrious men who had passed away during his lifetime. He died in 1881.

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STANLEY

1815—1881

IN MEMORIAM—THOMAS CARLYLE

The kingdom of heaven is likened unto a man which sowed good seed in his field.—Matt. xiii., 24.

THE gospel of this day starts with a comparison of the kingdom of heaven to a sower. It is the same as that with which the more celebrated parable begins, "A sower went forth to sow." They both fix our minds on the manner in which God's kingdom—the kingdom of truth, beauty and goodness—is carried on in the world. The kingdom of all that is good is fostered, not so much by direct and immediate plantation or grafting or building or formations of any kind, but rather by the sowing of good seed, which, in time, shall grow up and furnish a rich harvest.

It is so with regard to the truths of the Bible. They are sown in the world; the good which grows up after them is never, in outward form, like the truth which came from the actual source. Institutions spring up. They may derive their vitality from the corn and wheat which sink into the ground; but they cannot be the very thing itself. There

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is not a single form, or a single doctrine of Christendom, of which the outward shape is not different, in some way, from the principle of life which gave it birth.

There is only one instance of a ready-made scholastic doctrine in the whole Bible, and that has been long known to be spurious. It is not the verse of the three witnesses, but the parable of the Good Shepherd, the poetry of the Prodigal Son, the pathetic story of the Crucifixion, that have been the true seeds of the Christian life. In this way it is that the divine origin of these truths proves itself. The bright and tender words can never grow old, because they are not flowers cut and dried, but seeds and roots, which are capable of bearing a thousand applications.

Again, this is the ground of our looking forward with a hope, which nothing can extinguish, toward the transformation, the renewal of the human life, for a moment perishing, to reappear, we trust, in some future world, instinct with the capacities for good or evil with which it was endowed, or which it has acquired in the life that now is. The seminal form within the deeps of that little chaos sleeps, which will, we trust, in the almighty providence of God, restore that chaos of decayed and broken powers into conditions more elevated than now we can dream of.

Again, characters appear in the world which have a vivifying and regenerating ef-

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fect, not so much for the sake of what they teach us, as for the sake of showing us how to think and how to act. What Socrates taught, concerning man and the universe, has long since passed away; but what he taught of the method and process of pursuing truth —the inquiry, the cross-examination, the sifting of what we do know from what we do not know—this is the foundation of the good seed of European philosophy for all time. What St. Paul taught concerning circumcision and election or grace is among the things hard to be understood, which the unlearned and the unstable may wrest to their own destruction, or, having served their generation, may be laid asleep; but what he taught of the mode and manner of arriving at divine truth, when he showed how "the letter killeth and the spirit maketh alive"; when he set forth how charity is the bond of all perfectness; when he showed how all men are acceptable to God by fulfilling, each in his vocation, whether Jew or Gentile, whether slave or free, the commandments of God—he laid the true foundation of Christian faith; he planted in the heart of man the seed, the good seed, of Christian liberty and Christian duty, to bear fruit again and again amidst the many relapses and eclipses of Christendom. When Luther dinned into the ears of his generation the formula of transubstantiation and of justification by faith only, this was doomed to perish and

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"wax old as doth a garment"; but his acts, his utterances of indignant conscience and of far-sighted genius, became the seed of the Reformation, the hope of the world. When John Wesley rang the changes of the well-known formula of assurance, it was the word of the ordinary preacher; but, in his whole career of fifty years of testifying for holiness and preaching against vice, this was the seed of more than Methodism—it was the seed of the revival of English religious zeal. Such seeds, such principles, such infusions, not of a mechanical system, but of a new light in the world, are not of every-day occurrence—they are the work of a few, of a gifted few, and, therefore, are so much the more to be observed when anyone, who has had it in his power to scatter such seeds right and left, passes away and leaves us to ask what we have gained, what we can assimilate, of the peculiar nourishment which his life and teachings may have left for our advantage. Few will doubt that such an one was he who yesterday was taken from us. It may be that he will not be laid, as might have been expected, among the poets and scholars and sages, whose dust rests within this Abbey; it may be that he was drawn by an irresistible longing toward the native hills of his own Dumfriesshire, and that there, beside the bones of his kindred, beside his father and his mother, and with the silent ministrations of the Church of Scotland, to

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which he still clung amidst all the vicissitudes of his long existence, will repose all that is earthly of Thomas Carlyle. But he belonged to a wider sphere than Scotland; for, tho by nationality a Scotchman, he yet was loved and honored wherever the British language is spoken. Suffer me, then, to say a few words on the good seed which he has sown in our hearts.

In his teaching, as in all things human, there were, no doubt, tares, or what some would account tares, which must be left to after-times to adjust, as best they can, with the pure wheat which is gathered into the garner of God. There were imitators, parasites, exaggerators, of the genuine growth, which sometimes almost choked the original seed and disfigured its usefulness and its value; but of this we do not speak here. Gather them up into bundles and burn them. We speak only of him and of his best self. Nor would we now discourse at length on those brilliant gifts which gave such a charm to his writings, and such an unexampled splendor to his conversation. All the world knows how the words and the deeds of former times became, as Luther describes in the apostle's language, "not dead things, but living creatures with hands and feet." Every detail was presented before us, penetrated through and through with the fire of poetic imagination, which was the more powerful

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because it derived its warmth from facts gathered together by the most untiring industry. Who can ever, from this time forward, picture the death of Louis XVI, or the flight of the king and queen, without remembering the thrill of emotion with which, through the "History of the French Revolution," they became acquainted with him for the first time? Who can wander among the ruins of St. Edmunds's at Bury without feeling that they are haunted in every corner by the lifelike figure of the Abbot Samson, as he is drawn from the musty chronicle of Jocelyn? Who can read the letters and the speeches of Cromwell, now made almost intelligible to modern years, without gratitude to the unwearied zeal which gathered together from every corner those relics of departed greatness? What German can fail to acknowledge that, not even in that much-enduring, all-exhausting, country of research and labor—not even there has there been raised such a monument to Frederick the Second, called the Great, as by the simple Scotchman who, for the sake of describing what he considered the last hero-king, almost made himself, for the time, a soldier and a statesman?

But, on these and many like topics, this is not the time or place to speak. It is for us to ask, as I have said, What was the good seed which he sowed in the field of our hearts, and in what respects we shall be, or ought to be,

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the better for the sower having lived and died among us?

It was customary for those who honored him to speak of him as a prophet. And, if we take the word in its largest sense, he truly deserved the name. He was a prophet, in the midst of an untoward generation: his prophet's mantle was his rough Scotch dialect, and his own peculiar diction, and his own secluded manner of life. He was a prophet, most of all, in the emphatic utterance of truth which no one else, or hardly anyone else, ventured to deliver, and which, he felt, was a message of good to a world which sorely needed them. He stood almost alone, among the men of his time, in opposing a stern, inflexible resistance to the whole drift and pressure of modern days toward exalting popular opinion and popular movements as oracles to be valued above the judgment of the few, above the judgment of the wise, the strong, and the good. Statesmen, men of letters, preachers, have all bowed their heads under the yoke of this, as they believed, irresistible domination, under the impression that the first duty of the chiefest man is, not to lead, but to be led—the necessary conditions of success, to ascertain which way the current flows, and to swim with it as far as it will bear us. To his mind all this proved an insane delusion. That expression of his, which has become, like many of his expressions, almost

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proverbial in the minds of those who like them least, will express the attitude of his mind, his answer to the question, "What are the people of England?" "Thirty millions—mostly fools." The whole framework and fabric of his mind was built up on the belief that there are not many wise, not many noble minds, not many destined by the supreme Ruler of the universe to rule their fellows; that few are chosen; that "strait is the gate and narrow is the way, and few there be that find it." But, when the few appear, when the great and good present themselves it is the duty and the wisdom of the multitude to seek their guidance. A Luther, a Cromwell, a Goethe, were to him the born kings of men. This was his doctrine of the work of heroes; this, right or wrong, was the mission of his life. It is, all things considered, a fact much to be meditated upon; it is, all things considered, a seed which is worthy of all cultivation.

There is another feeling of the age to which he also stood resolutely opposed, or, rather, a feeling of the age which was resolutely opposed to him, the tendency to divide men into two hostile camps, parted from each other by watchwords and flags, and banners and tokens, which we commonly designate by the name of party. He, perchance, disparaged unduly the usefulness, the necessity, of party organization or party spirit as a mode of the secondary machinery

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by which the great affairs of the world are carried on; but he was a signal example of a man who not only could be measured by no party standard, but who absolutely disregarded it. He never, during the whole course of his long life, took any active part, never, I believe, voted in those elections which, to most of us, are the very breath of our nostrils. For its own sake he cherished whatever was worth preserving; for its own sake he hailed whatever improvement was worth effecting. He cared not under what name or by what man the preservation or the improvement was achieved. This, too, is an ideal which few can attain, which still fewer attempt; but it is something to have had one man who was possest by it as a vital and saving truth. And such a man was the Prophet of Chelsea. But there was that in him which, in spite of his own contemptuous description of the people, in spite of his scorn for the struggles of party, endeared him, in no common degree, even to those who most disagreed with him—even to the humblest classes of our great community. He was an eminent instance of how a man can trample on the most cherished idols of the market-place, if yet he shows that he has in his heart of hearts the joys, the sorrows, the needs of his toiling, suffering fellow creatures. In this way they insensibly felt drawn toward that tender, fervid nature which was weak when they were weak, which

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burned with indignation when they suffered wrong. They felt that, if he despised them, it was in love; if he refused to follow their bidding, it was because he believed that their bidding was an illusion.

And for that independence of party of which I spoke, there was also the countervailing source, that no man could for a moment dream that it arose from indifference to his country. He was no monk; he was no hermit dwelling apart from the passions which sway the destinies of a great nation. There is no man living to whom the thrift, the industry, the valor of his countrymen were so deeply precious. There is no man living, to whom, had it been possible for him to have been aroused from the torpor of approaching death, the news would have been more welcome that the Parliament of England had been in the last week saved from becoming a byword and reproach and shame among the nations of the earth. And all this arose out of a frame of mind which others have shared with him, but which, perhaps, few have been able to share to the same extent. The earnestness, almost the very word is his own, the earnestness, the seriousness, with which he approached the great problems of all human life, have made us feel them also. The tides of fashion have swept over the minds of many who once were swayed by his peculiar tones; but there must be many a young man whose first feelings of

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generosity and public spirit were roused within him by the cry as if from the very depths of his heart, "Where, now, are your Hengists and your Horsas? Where are those leaders who should be leading their people to useful employments, to distant countries, where are they? Preserving their game!" Before his withering indignation all false pretensions, all excuses for worthless idleness and selfish luxury, fell away. The word which he invented to describe them has sunk, perhaps, into cant and hollowness; but it had a truth when first he uttered it. Those falsities were shams, and they who practised them were guilty of the sin which the Bible, in scathing scorn, calls hypocrisy.

And whence came this earnestness? Deep down in the bottom of his soul it springs from his firm conviction that there was a higher, a better world than that visible to our outward senses. All, whether called saints, in the middle ages, or Puritans, in the seventeenth century, or what you like in our own day, he revered them, with all their eccentricities, as bright and learned examples of those who "sacrificed their lives to their higher natures, their worser to their better parts." In addressing the students of Edinburgh, he bade them remember that the deep recognition of the eternal justice of heaven, and the unfailing punishment of crimes against the law of God, is at the origin and foundation of all

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the histories of nations. No nation which did not contemplate this wonderful universe with an awe-stricken and reverential belief that there was a great unknown, omnipotent, all-wise, and all-just Being superintending all men and all interests in it, no nation ever came to very much, nor did any man either, who forgot that. If a man forgot that, he forgot the most important part of his mission in the world. So he spoke, and the ground of his hope for Europe—of his hope, we may say, against hope—was that, after all, in any commonwealth where the Christian religion exists, nay, in any commonwealth where it has once existed, public or private virtue, the basis of all good, never can become extinct; but in every new age, and even from the deepest decline, there is a chance, and, in the course of ages, the certainty, of renovation. The divine depths of sorrow, the sanctuary of sorrow, the life and death of the divine Man, were, to him, Christianity. We stand, as it were, beside him whilst the grave has not yet closed over those flashing eyes, over those granite features, over that weird form on which we have so often looked, whilst the silence of death has fallen on that house which was once so frequented and so honored. We call up memories which occurred to ourselves. One such, in the far past, may, perchance, come with peculiar force to those whose work is appointed in this place. Many years ago,

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whilst I belonged to another cathedral, I met him in St. James' Park, and walked with him to his own house. It was during the Crimean war; and after hearing him denounce, with his vigorous and, perhaps, exaggerated earnestness, the chaos and confusion into which our administration had fallen, and the doubt and distrust which pervaded all classes at the time, I ventured to ask him, "What, under the circumstances, is your advice to a canon of an English cathedral?" He grimly laughed at my question. He paused for a moment and then answered, in homely and well-known words; but which were, as it happened, especially fitted to situations like that in which he was asked to give his counsel—"Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with all thy might." That is, no doubt, the lesson he leaves to each one of us in this place, and also to this weary world—the world of which he felt the weariness as age and infirmity grew upon him—the lesson which, in his more active days, he practised to the very letter. He is at rest, he is at rest; delivered from that burden of the flesh against which he chafed and fretted: he is at rest! In his own words, "Babylon, with its deathening inanity, rages on to the dim innocuous and unheeded forever." From the "silence of the eternities," of which he so often spoke, there still sound, and will long sound, the tones of that marvelous voice.

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Let us take one tender expression, written three or four years ago—one plaintive yet manful thought, which has never yet reached the public eye: "'Three nights ago, stepping out after midnight and looking up at the stars, which were clear and numerous, it struck me with a strong, new kind of feeling: 'In a little while I shall have seen you also for the last time. God Almighty's own theater of immensity—the infinite made palpable and visible to me—that also will be closed—flung too in my face—and I shall never behold death any more.' The thought of the eternal deprivation even of this, tho this is such a nothing in comparison, was sad and painful to me. And then a second feeling rose upon me: 'What if Omnipotence that has developed in me these appetites, these reverences, these infinite affections, should actually have said, Yes, poor mortal, such as you who have gone so far, shall be permitted to go further. Hope! despair not!' God's will, not ours, be done."

Yes, God's will be done for us and for him. The Lord gave, and the Lord taketh away.

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VAUGHAN

GOD CALLING TO MAN

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

CHARLES JOHN VAUGHAN, Church of England divine and educator, was born at Leicester in 1816, and educated at Rugby under Dr. Arnold. He was ordained in 1841 and in 1844 elected headmaster of Harrow. But the post which gave him the best opportunity as a preacher, was that of Master of the Temple which he occupied from 1869 to 1894. He was a leader in the Broad Church party and his sermons are marked by simplicity of diction, deep sincerity, and rare spiritual insight. He died at Llandoff, of which he had been dean since 1879, in 1897.

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VAUGHAN

1816—1897

GOD CALLING TO MAN

And the Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?—Genesis iii., 9.

"I WISH," said a great man of our day, "that some one would preach under the dome of St. Paul's, on the text, 'Where art thou, Adam?'" A noble subject, my brethren, when we think of it! But who is equal to the task of handling it? The work of God is quick and powerful—may it be so now, He Himself using it, and prospering it in the thing whereto He sent it.

I shall ask you to look very closely into the text itself. I need not tell anyone whence it comes; from the midst of that awful story which tells us of the first sin, and of its immediate consequences. That same story is in substance acted over and over again in every marked sin that is ever done by any man: the same mode of temptation; first inward question, "Yea, hath God said? is this thing which I wish to do really forbidden?" and then the thought of the hardship; "God doth know that this which He has forbidden is something desirable, something delightful; it is hard that it should be denied me;" and then

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the growing confidence, "I shall not surely die for it;" and then the last review of all the advantages, "good for food—pleasant to the eyes—to be desired to make me wise, or to make me happy, or to make me independent;" and then the act itself—the taking and eating; and then the sense of leanness entering into the very soul. But that is not all which sin brings after it. The next tells us of a summons, and after the context of an arraigning, and an examination, and at first a self-excusing, and then of a conviction, and a silencing, and a judgment: only one little word of comfort, one little streak of light, amidst all the sorrow, and all the curse, and all the gloom.

But I intend to sever the text now somewhat from its context, and to look into it, with you, by itself alone. "The Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?" There is the speaker—God, the Lord God. There is the person spoken to—Adam, the first man; Adam, from whom we all sprang; the father, and the likeness, and the representative of us all. There is the nature of the address—a call, a summons, decisive, authoritative, majestic. There are, at last, the words uttered—few and plain, yet, when looked into, big with meaning—"Where art thou?" And we shall not end without appealing to all of you, to each of you separately, to answer that question; to answer it

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truly, as we shall all have to answer it one day.

Now I shall not occupy your time, or use many words, about the speaker. There are those who profess to doubt the being of God; and there are those, on the other hand, who profess to prove it. I shall not suspect you of the one, and I shall not endeavor to do the other. I am quite sure that in your inmost hearts you do not doubt His being; and I am quite certain that, if you do, I cannot prove it to you. The being of God is not a matter of argument, it is a matter of instinct. The doubt or denial of it may pass muster with scoffing men in robust health and prosperous circumstances; but nine out of ten of those same men, finding themselves in sudden danger, by land or sea, from accident or disease, will be heard praying: they may conceal it, they may disown it, they may be ashamed of it afterwards—but they did it: and that prayer was a witness, an unimpeachable witness, that down in the depths of their heart there was a belief in God all the time; in their works alike and in their words they deny Him, but in their inmost souls, like the very spirits of evil, they believe and tremble. God, then, speaks here. I tell you not who He is: you know it; you know that there is such a person, your creator, your ruler, your judge: happy if you know also that He is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!

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Now, to whom does He here speak? I will say two things of His call as here described: First, that it is an individual call; and, secondly, that it is a universal call. We try to make God's call a vague one. It is for some one, no doubt; but every natural man tries to put it away from himself. In hearing a sermon, everyone thinks how suitable this reproof or that warning is to his neighbor; he goes away to wish that such a person had heard it, to hope that such a person listened to it; but the person who thus hopes, and probably, too, the person thus hoped about, never thought of taking it home—never said to himself, tho he was but too ready to say to another, "Thou art the man." Nevertheless, God's call is an individual one. The only use of it is to be so. O that we could hear it in that spirit! O that we could practise ourselves in so hearing it! Where art thou? not, where is he? still less, generally, where are they? Read the Bible thus, my brethren, as written for you, for your learning, for your reproof, for your comfort—yours individually and personally—and you will never need it in vain.

But this individual call is also universal. Let us not flatter ourselves that we are more to God than others are: it is a very common, tho a well-disguised notion. We think that our souls are more important than any others; and that is the least form of the error:

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but we go on to think our faults are more excusable, our sins more venial, than those of others; we go on to think that God will spare us when He does not spare others; we go on to think that our virtues are greater, our self-denials more meritorious, than those of others; and by this time we have got farther away from the truth and the gospel, than the poor self-condemning sinner who feels, and denies it not, that he is yet in the gall of bitterness, in the very bond of iniquity.

The call of God, like the care of God, is universal. It is to the race. It is to His creatures. Hear the word—"The Lord God called unto Adam, and said unto him." If it had been, God called to Abraham, or to Moses, or to David, there would have been some particularity, perhaps some limitation, in the summons; but none of us can say he is not included when Adam is spoken to; he is, indeed, the father of us all: of him we all come. What God says to him, He certainly says to us—to us all, as to each of us.

But we ask, perhaps, thirdly: How does God call to us? I will say, in three ways. He calls within—in conscience. Can you tell me what that thing is in each of us which seems at once so intimate with us, yet so independent of us, that it knows everything we do, or say, or even think, and yet sits in judgment upon us for everything? Is it not a strange thing? We should expect that the

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whole man would move together; that, if we did a thing, if we said a thing, if we thought a thing, we should go along with it, we should approve that thing: but is it so? No; we carry about within us a whole machinery of judicature; a witness, a jury, a judge, yes, an executioner, too; and, strange to say, it is in early life that the process is most perceptible, just while we are most ignorant, least reflecting, least logical in our judgments. It is the work of many men through life to stifle the voice within, and at last they almost succeed: but do not tell me that you have no such voice within—certainly you will not say that you never had it; and I will tell you what that voice is, or was. It was the voice of the Lord God within, calling to Adam, and saying, "Where art thou?"

He calls also without—in providence. I really know not whether this be not the most persuasive of all His modes of calling to us; certainly it is the most authoritative of all. Conscience may be stifled, but providence grasps us very tightly—we cannot escape from it. Tell me, who caused you to be born where and what you were? Who settled that you should be born in this country and not in that? Who decided that you were to have poor parents or rich, Christian parents or un-Christian? Who has managed your circumstances for you since you had a being? Who gave you, who has continued to give you, your

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vigor of mind and body, your power of enjoyment, or your experience of kindness, or your principles of judgment, or your instincts of affection? Who took away from you that friend for whom you are now mourning—that parent, that brother, that sister, that wife, that child? Yes, we may forget it, or we may fret under it, but in the hands of a providence we all are; we are utterly powerless in that grasp: and whether we will believe it or no, that power is a voice too—a call from God without, even as conscience is His voice and His call within.

Onee more, God calls from above also—in revelation. My friend, believest thou the Scriptures? I know that thou believest. Your presence here seems to say that you do. And yet in this multitude how many must there be who do not in their hearts believe! Let me rather say, who do not in their lives believe; for in your hearts I think you do: sure I am that there are some parts of the Bible which you cannot read and disbelieve; of course you may leave them unread, that is always possible—easier than to read them—but I do not think you can read the fifty-third chapter of Isaiah, for example, in the Old Testament, and I do not think you can read one chapter of St. John's Gospel in the New Testament, and shut the book, saying, "There is nothing in it." I suspect that is why we so often leave the Bible

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unread—just because we believe it; we feel, when we do read it, that it is God's voice, and we do not want to hear that voice. The Bible is more its own witness than we like oftentimes to admit.

"Who that has felt its glance of dread
Thrill through his heart's remotest cells,
About his path, about his bed,
Can doubt what spirit in it dwells?"

God speaks; and speaks to us—to each of us and to all of us; and speaks, chiefly in three ways—in conscience, in providence, in revelation: and now, fourthly, what is His call? How is it here briefly exprest? It might have been put, it is put in the Bible, in different forms—but how is it here exprest? "The Lord called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?" This is a call, first, to attention. As tho God had said, Listen to Me. That is the first step in all religion. What we want first is a spirit of attention. It is the great art of our enemy to keep our thoughts off religion. That is the meaning of the overwhelming cares of life. The devil would occupy our whole time and thoughts with something which is not, and has nothing (as he persuades us) to do with God. That is the meaning of the excessive amusements of life. The cares of life are not enough to engross the attention of all men always; and therefore the enemy provides something which shall al-

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ternate with them for some men, and take the place of them for others. It is this art which God, in His mercy, in His long-suffering, in His desire that we should not perish, has to counteract by His divine skill. He takes a man aside now and then, from time to time—blest be His name for it!—and makes him listen. He interposes by some chastisement, some sickness, some bereavement, and constrains him to hearken to what He, the Lord God, has to say concerning him and to him. This is the first point gained. Behold, he listens! better still, Behold, he prayeth! It is a call, next, to the recognition of God's being, and of our responsibility to Him. "Where art thou?" It is as if He had said, I am, and thou art Mine. As if He has said, I have a right to know about thee, and thou canst not evade Me. As if He had said, I am about, now, to enter into judgment with thee: give an account of thy stewardship. Yes, my brethren, it is an awful moment, when a man first becomes distinctly conscious that God is, and is something to him. He may have talked of God before: he may have fancied that he knew all about Him: he may even have prayed before, and confest himself before, and asked grace and help before: but now, for the first time, he sees how much more there is in all this than he has yet dreamed of; and the only words which he can find at all to express his new feeling, are those of the patriarch of old

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—"I have heard of thee by the hearing of the ear, but now mine eye seeth thee: wherefore I abhor myself, and repent in dust and ashes."

It is a call, once more, and yet more particularly, to reflect upon our place or our position. I know not how else to express the force of the inquiry, "Where art thou?" It may be read literally—of place. May not some one of those here assembled have been, ere now, perhaps often, perhaps quite recently, in some place in which the question, "Where art thou?" would have had a startling and condemning sound?—some place where he was sinning? some place where he had gone to sin? some place where he would not for the world have been seen by any human eye, and where he gladly forgot that there was yet one eye which did see him? Oh, if God stood this night upon earth, and called aloud to the "Adam" of this generation—to the men and women who form now the sum of the living human creation; if He should call them suddenly from the east and from the west to avow exactly where they were, and to come forth from that place as they were, without an instant allowed them to cover up and disguise themselves; oh, what a revelation would it be of action and of character! Oh, who might abide the scrutiny of that question? Oh, who could stand when that inquirer appeared? But, even if the literal local ques-

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tion could be well answered, there would remain yet another behind applicable to all men. "Where art thou?" is an inquiry as to position no less than place. It says, "What is thy present place as a man with a soul, as an immortal being? What is thy present standing, thy present state? Art thou safe? Art thou happy? Art thou useful? Art thou doing the work I gave thee to do? Is it well with thee in the present? Is it well with thee in the future? Say not, I can not answer, I know not. I have taught thee how to judge of thyself; now therefore advise, and see what answer thou wilt return to Him that made thee."

My brethren, I propose, in the last place, that we all answer this question. It is a very serious thing to do; and it is what no man can do for his brother. Each one of us has one secret place, one sanctuary within the veil, into which, not even once a year, not even in the character of a high priest, can earthly foot ever enter. Yet in that secret place shines forth the light of God's presence; a light never put out altogether in any man, so far at least as its disclosing and revealing character is concerned, until sin and perverseness have done their perfect work, and the awful words are at length fulfilled, "If the light that is in thee be darkness, how great is that darkness!" At present, we will humbly hope, that this last ruin has not been wrought in any

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one who hears me. And if not, I repeat it, we can all, if we will, answer God's question, when He calls to each of us, as He does this night, and says, "Where art thou?"

One of us, perhaps, answers, if he speaks truly, I am wandering. I have left my Father's home; I took my portion of His goods, and carried them away into a far country. Yes, He was very generous to me; He grudged me nothing; life and health, food and clothing, even success in the world, even human friendship and human love, He gave me all these, and upbraided not: He warned me that I should be sorry one day if I left Him; He cautioned me against the perils of my way; He told me that I should not find happiness; He bade me, if I wished for that, to stay; He bade me, if I should ever be sorry that I had gone, to arise instantly and return. My heart was young then, and I thought I knew best; I left Him, with little feeling, with much expectation; His last look was one of regretful love that I left Him and I am a wanderer still. Sometimes I have arisen to go to my Father, but I went not: I was ashamed, I was afraid, I thought I was too sinful, I felt myself unstable, I feared that I might relapse, I dreaded reproach, I dreaded ridicule, I dreaded, above all, the sight of that face:—and thus stayed where I was, in the far country—I am a wanderer, an outcast still. And another answers, like him to whom the question

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in the text was first put, I am hiding. I have sinned and I have not repented. I have eaten of the tree of which God said to me, "Thou shalt not eat of it, neither shalt thou touch it, lest thou die." I believed the creature more than the Creator—the tempter more than the Savior. I went to the edge of temptation; I desired forbidden knowledge first, and then I could not rest until I knew by experience also; and now my heart is defiled, my conscience is defiled, my life is defiled; I have lost all right to the beatific vision, for I am no longer pure in heart; now, when I hear the voice of the Lord God, I hide myself, because I know myself sinful, and because I know that He is of purer eyes than to look upon or tolerate iniquity. And another answers, I am resting. Earth is very pleasant to me; I have toiled and I have reaped; I have gathered myself a competence; I have found the happiness of lawful love; I have built myself a nest here, I have fenced it against the blasts of fortune, I am warm and tranquil within: let me alone a little while; it is not long that I can enjoy it; soon calamity may come, loss, sickness, death, into my peaceful home; then I will turn and seek Thee—not yet, O not just yet! And another says, I am working. Am I not doing Thy work? Am I not discharging the duties of my station? Am I not setting an example of diligence and sobriety? Am I not availing myself of the

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faculties which Thou has given to make myself respectable, and useful, and exemplary in my generation? How can I do all this, and yet be religious? How can I find time for both worlds at once? But yet, indeed, am I not providing for that other world in making a proper use of this? Let me alone a little while; when I have a convenient season, I will call for Thee. And another says, honestly, I am trifling. The world is so gay, so amusing, so exciting: hast Thou not made it so for our enjoyment? Oh, grudge me not my brief time of mirth and forgetfulness; I shall be serious enough one day. And another says, I am coming. Yes, I am on my way. This is no world, I see it, of rest for me. There is no peace but in God: I sought it once elsewhere, and found it not: now I know my error; yes, I am coming, I am coming, I am on my way: but give me time: so great a change cannot be wrought all at once: heaven cannot be won in a day: give me time, and I will reach Thee. I am now using the means: I pray, I read the Bible, I go to Thy House, I partake in Christ's supper: surely this is the way to Thee!

Yes, my brother, but why this delay? Why this postponement of the desired result? Wilt thou be any fitter to-morrow than to-day for that step across the barrier which now seems so premature, so presumptuous? The word is very nigh thee: it is in thy mouth, it is in

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thy heart—thou knowest it well, even the word of faith—"Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ," at once, "and thou shalt be saved. Come unto me"—not to-morrow, but to-day—"all ye that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." Are there any here present—God grant that they be many!—who have yet one other answer to return to the question on which we have dwelt? Thou sayest to me, O Lord, "Where art thou?" Lord, I am a sinner in a world of danger; and I have learned that danger in myself; for I have fallen, and I have sinned against Thee, times without number; yet by Thy grace I have risen, and I have returned to Thee, and Thou hast accepted me in Thy Son, and hast endued me, according to my need, with Thy Holy Spirit. And now, Lord, my life is hid with Christ in Thee: He is my trust, He is my life, He is my hope, and the life that I now live upon earth, I live by faith in Him. Under Thy care, doing Thy work, thankful for Thy mercies, trusting in Thy strength, even now I am Thine, and hereafter I shall see Thee. Guide Thou my steps, make Thy way plain before me, in the days that remain to me, and at last receive me to Thyself, disciplined, humbled, sanctified, that I may rest in Thee forever, and forever see Thy glory!

My brethren, the work of God in each of us would be almost accomplished if this one call were heard within. Once let us know that

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God is speaking to us, and that He waits an answer; once let us feel that He is, and that He will have us to be saved, and all the rest will follow. May it be so now! May some wanderer this night return to his Father; some hiding soul this night come forth from its lurking place; some builder upon the sand lay this night his foundations upon the rock; some trifler be made serious; some worldly man turned heavenward—so that all may have cause to bless God for His word here spoken, and ascribe to Him, through eternal ages, thanksgiving, and blessing, and praise!

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NEWMAN HALL

CHRISTIAN VICTORY

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

CHRISTOPHER NEWMAN HALL, Congregational divine, was born at Maidstone, Kent, in 1816. He was widely known as a writer, lecturer, and preacher of great eloquence. During the Civil War he was enthusiastic in advocating the cause of the North, and subsequently two extended tours in the United States brought him international fame. His tract, "Come to Jesus," published in 1846, has been translated into over twenty languages. He died in 1902.

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NEWMAN HALL

1816—1902

CHRISTIAN VICTORY

To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it.—Rev. ii., 17.

THE Christian life is often compared in Scripture to a warfare. Followers of Jesus are "soldiers." They are exhorted to put on "the whole armor of God." They "fight the good fight of faith." Some of you have been engaged in the conflict: others have more recently entered upon it. But, whether young or old in the Christian career, all find it necessary to be constantly stirred up to watchfulness against the never-ceasing assaults of the foe. It is not enough to put on the armor and to commence the battle. He that overcometh, and he alone, will receive the salutation, "Well done, good and faithful servant,"—he alone shall "lay hold upon eternal life."

But we are not left to fight without encouragement. As generals before a battle go in front of their troops to stimulate them to valor, so Christ, the Captain of our Salvation,

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leads on the consecrated hosts of His elect; and having himself set us a glorious example of valor and victory, animates us to follow in His footsteps by the "exceeding great and precious promises" of His word. Christian warrior! let your eye be lifted up to Him. Behold Him beckoning you onward. Listen to Him, as from His throne of glory He exhorts you to persevering valor against the foe; and pray earnestly that His promise may be fulfilled in your case: "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna, and will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth saving he that receiveth it."

Let us consider first, the promise; then, the condition attached to it.

I. The promise. This is twofold,—the hidden manna and the white stone.

1. The hidden manna.—God fed the Israelites in the wilderness with manna. A portion of this was laid by in the ark, and thus was hidden from public view. It is here referred to as a figurative representation of the spiritual blessings bestowed upon the victor in the heavenly fight. Christ, speaking of the manna as a type of Himself, said, "I am the bread which came down from heaven." The manna in the wilderness sustained the life of the Israelites.

But there is another life more important than that of the body. By sin the soul is

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dead, dead toward God. By the Holy Spirit, the "dead in trespasses and sins" are "quickened," or made alive. As the life of the new-born infant cannot be preserved without food, so the new spiritual life which God imparts needs continual support. Both the life, and the nourishing of it, come from Christ, and Christ alone. By His sacrifice that life becomes possible; and by His spirit working within our hearts that life becomes actual. He sustains as well as imparts spiritual vitality. He is the food of our faith: "believe in the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved." He is the food of our love: "we love him because he first loved us." He is the food of our obedience: "the love of Christ constraineth us." He is the food of our peace: for when "justified by faith, we have peace with God through Jesus Christ our Lord." He is the food of our joy: for if "we joy in God" it is "through Jesus Christ our Lord."

The manna which sustained the Israelites was evidently the gift of God. And so this "hidden manna" is from heaven. It is no contrivance of man—no philosophy of human invention. It is a divine plan for the salvation of our ruined race. "God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish but should have everlasting life." That manna in the wilderness was sweet to the

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taste; yet they who fed on it grew weary of it. But the more we eat of the bread of life, the more we relish it—the greater is our appetite for it. That manna in the wilderness was needed daily. And so with this heavenly bread. Yesterday's supply will not suffice for to-day. The prayer is as needful for the soul as for the body: "Give us this day our daily bread." But if that manna was needed daily, so it was supplied; none went in vain at the appointed season—and no soul that "hungers and thirsts after righteousness" is sent empty away. The manna was supplied to the Israelites till they came to the promised land—so God has promised that His grace shall not fail His people through their wanderings.

It is spoken of as the "hidden manna." Such is the Christian's life. "Our life is hid with Christ in God." The outward effects of it may be seen, but the inner life is invisible. So is the nourishing of the life. You may see the Christian on his knees, you may hear the words which he utters, but you cannot see the streams of divine influence which are poured into his spirit; nor hear the sweet whispers of divine love which fill him with joy; nor comprehend the peace passing all understanding which he is permitted to experience. Unbelievers are often amazed at what they see in the Christian. He is troubled on every side, yet not in despair. Waves of sorrow beat

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upon his frail vessel, yet it does not sink. Men now threaten, now allure, but he holds on his way. What to others is an irresistible charm, is no attraction to him. What is a terror to others, deters not him. Why does he not faint beneath the burden? why does he not sink in the storm? Because he eats of the "hidden manna." "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him." "He hath taken him into his banqueting-room, and the banner over him is love."

Were this promise merely the reward of final victory, that victory itself would never be gained. We need to eat this manna during our pilgrimage. We cannot live without it. Every act of overcoming will be followed by a verification of the promise, "I will give him to eat of the hidden manna." Yet we must look beyond the present life for its full accomplishment. "To him that overcometh" at the last "shall be given the hidden manna," in a sense of which at present we have but a very faint conception.

As the manna was hidden in the ark, and that ark was hidden behind the curtain of the Holy of Holies, so the Christian's hope, "as an anchor of the soul, sure and stedfast, enters into that which is within the veil." Those joys we cannot yet conjecture; their splendor is too intense; we should be blinded by excessive light; we should be overpowered by the excellent glory.

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One look of heaven would unfit us for earth. It is wisely appointed that at present this manna should in one sense be hidden, even from ourselves. We are as yet but babes—such strong meat would not suit us now; we must be content with simpler fare. But oh! if the manna, tho at present so partially and imperfectly appreciated, can produce such peace and joy, what must be the bliss of entering into the holiest of all, and there, in the presence of God Himself, feasting on it eternally! Unceasing, unlimited reception of divine influences into the soul!

Uninterrupted fellowship with Him who is the only fountain of life, and purity, and happiness! Perfect love! But at present such full fruition is "hidden." "Now we see through a glass darkly"; "now we know but in part"; "it doth not yet appear what we shall be. But how unspeakably blest are they to whom, partially in this world and perfectly in the next, the promise shall be verified: "To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the hidden manna"!

2. The white stone.—Reference is made to the *tessera hospitalis*, the tally or token of hospitality employed by the ancients. At a time when houses of public entertainment were less common, private hospitality was the more necessary. When one person was received kindly by another, or a contract of

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friendship was entered into, the *tessera* was given. It was so named from its shape, being four-sided; it was sometimes of wood; sometimes of stone; it was divided into two by the contracting parties; each wrote his own name on half of the *tessera;* then they exchanged pieces, and therefore the name or device on the piece of *tessera* which each received, was the name the other person had written upon it, and which no one else knew but him who received it. It was carefully prized, and entitled the bearer to protection and hospitality.

Plautus, in one of his playes, refers to this custom. Hanno inquires of a stranger where he may find Agorastocles, and discovers to his surprize that he is addressing the object of his search.

"If so," he says, "compare, if you please, this hospitable *tessera;* here it is; I have it with me."

Agorastocles replies, "It is the exact counterpart; I have the other part at home."

Hanno responds, "O my friend! I rejoice to meet thee; thy father was my friend, my guest; I divided with him this hospitable *tessera.*" "Therefore," said Agorastocles, "thou shalt have a home with me, for I reverence hospitality."

Beautiful illustration of gospel truth! The Savior visits the sinner's heart, and being received as a guest, bestows the white stone, the

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token of His unchanging love. It is not we who in the first instance desire this compact. Far from it.

But Jesus, anxious to bless us, kindly forces Himself on our regard. By His spirit, he persuades us to give Him admission to our hearts. "Behold, I stand at the door and knock; if any man hear my voice and open the door, I will come in to him, and will sup with him, and he with me." We often disregarded His appeal. Yet, with what condescending kindness did he persevere! And when at length we opened the door, we saw Him laden with blessings which He had been long waiting to bestow. The feast which was then spread was all of His providing. He who went to be "the guest of one that was a sinner," inverts the usual course. He invites Himself and brings the feast. What have we fit to set before so august and holy a visitant? But He who chooses the sinner's heart as His banqueting-chamber, spreads there His choicest gifts, His exceeding great and precious promises, His finished sacrifice, His human sympathy, His perfect example, His pure precepts, His all-prevailing intercession, the various developments of His infinite love.

He "sups with us," and makes us "sup with Him." He enrolls our name among His friends. "He makes an everlasting covenant with us, ordered in all things and sure." He promises never to leave nor forsake us. He

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tells us we "shall never perish." He gives us the *tessera*, the white stone!

Is not this "the witness of the Spirit," the "earnest of the promised possession"? Does not "the Spirit witness with our spirit that we are born of God"? Does not our experience of the friendship of Jesus correspond with what we are taught of it in the Scriptures? "I know in whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him, against that day." The "love of God is shed abroad" in the heart of the believer. He says, with humble confidence, "My Lord, and my God!"

On this white stone is inscribed a "new name." The part of the *tessera* which each of the contracting parties received contained the name of the other. And, therefore, "the new name" on the "white stone," which he that overcometh receives, is that of Him who gives. By the unbeliever, God is known as Power, as Majesty, as Justice. He is dreaded. "The carnal mind is enmity against God." The Christian alone knows Him as "Love!" Jehovah has now "a new name." He was once a ruler—now He is Friend; He was once judge—now He is Father.

Do you know God by His "new name"? Do you so know Him as to wish no longer to hide from Him, but to hide in Him, as the only home the universe can furnish in which

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you can be safe and happy? Have you learned to say, "Our Father which art in heaven"? If we have, indeed, received this "white stone," let us continually be reading the "new name" engraven on it. Here I am assured that the Holy Ghost is my teacher, my guide, my comforter; that the eternal Word, the only begotten Son, is my Savior, my Friend, my Brother; that the infinite Jehovah is my Father, and that "like as a father pitieth his children, so the Lord pitieth them that fear him."

We are told that no man knoweth this new name, "saving he that receiveth it." He knows it for himself, but no one else can read it for him. Thus it resembles the "hidden manna." The frivolous may deride, fools may mock, the unbeliever may deny, the sceptic may bring forth his objections in all the pride of a false philosophy; but the Christian, even if unable to reply to the caviller, or to make intelligible to any other mind his own strong assurance, has an evidence within him which nothing can shake, for God has written on his heart "His new best name of Love."

Fellow pilgrims to the heavenly Canaan, how precious is this token! We are travelers through the desert; for tho the enjoyments of earth are many, yet this life, compared with what is to come, is a wilderness. We are away from home; we are exposed to priva-

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tions, tempests, foes; we constantly need a refuge. But we are never far from the house of a friend. Everywhere, in every city and in every village, on the desert and on the ocean, in the solitude of secrecy, and in the solitude of a crowd, in the bustle of business, and in the sick chamber, a Friend is at hand, who will always recognize the white stone He gave us, a token of His love. We have only to present it to claim the fulfilment of His promise.

How wide will the door be thrown open for our reception! What divine entertainment we shall receive! what safety from peril! what succor in difficulty! what comfort in trouble! what white raiment! what heavenly food! O that we valued the *tessera* more, that we sought more frequent interviews with our heavenly Friend, that we more habitually resorted as invited guests to Jesus, and dwelt in Him as the home of our souls! We shall never find the door closed against us; we shall never be received reluctantly; He will never allow us to think that we are intruders. Jesus is never ashamed of His poor relations, nor treats them coldly because they need His help. The greater our distress, the more shall we prove His liberality and tender sympathy.

And as regards this stone, as well as the hidden manna, we can look beyond the present life. A day is coming when we shall be compelled to leave the homes of earth, however endeared. We must embrace for the last time

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the friends united to us as our own souls. Tho we have traveled along the road many a year together, we must now separate, and go alone. They may accompany us to the river side, but we must cross it by ourselves. What cheering voice will greet us then? What kind roof will receive us then? What loving friend will welcome us then?

But we shall not have left our best treasure behind us! No! we shall carry the white stone with us; and with this we shall look for no inferior abode, but with unhesitating step shall advance at once right up to the palace of the Great King. We present the *tessera;* the "new name" is legible upon it; the angelic guards recognize the symbol; the everlasting gates lift up their heads; and the voice of Jesus Himself invites us to enter, saying, "Come, ye blessed of my Father, inherit the kingdom!"

Such is the welcome that every soul shall experience to whom the promise is fulfilled: "I will give him a white stone, and in the stone a new name written, which no man knoweth, saving he that receiveth it."

II. The condition annexed to the promise, "To him that overcometh!"

A great war is going on between the Church and the powers of darkness. It is not an affair of strategy between two vast armies, wherein skilful maneuvers determine the issue, many on either side never coming into actual

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combat; but every Christian has to fight hand to hand with the enemy. We cannot be lost in the crowd. We may not stand in the middle of the hollow square, without sharing the perils of the outer rank. Every Christian must not only occupy his post in the grand army, but must personally grapple with the foe.

Before conversion there was no fighting. The devil's suggestions and the heart's inclination were allied. Then we did the enemy's bidding, or were lulled to sleep by his intoxicating cup. But when light shone into the soul, and we strove to escape, the struggle began. God, as our Creator and Redeemer, justly demands our obedience and love. Whatever interferes with these claims, is an enemy summoning us to battle. The world of frivolity is our foe. How numerous and insinuating are its temptations—the more perilous because of the difficulty of defining them!

Moreover, lawful pleasures and necessary cares become dangerous when they cease to be subordinate to the love of God. The enjoyments He bestows and the labors He appoints are calculated to minister to godliness,—and yet they may be perverted to idolatry by our forgetting Him on whom our highest thoughts should be fixt. What danger is there that things in themselves holy and beautiful may thus become pernicious and destructive!

The flesh, too, furnished its contingent to

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the army of our foes. Not that any of our natural appetites, being divinely bestowed, can have in them the nature of sin. No! the flesh, as God made it, is pure and holy. But those instincts, which, regulated by the revealed will of their Author, are "holiness to the Lord," may, by unhallowed gratification, become those "fleshly lusts which war against the soul." As we carry about with us these animal propensities, there is necessity for constant vigilence lest our own nature, being abused, should become our destroyer.

Inbred depravity lurks in the heart of even the true believer. Tho dethroned, it is not completely expelled. With what selfishness, covetousness, vanity, hastiness of temper, uncharitableness, have we not to contend! Who has not some sin which most easily besets him? How varied are the forms of unbelief! Spiritual pride, too, corrupts our very graces, piety itself furnishing an occasion of evil, so that when we have conquered some temptation or performed some duty, our victory is often tarnished, our holy things corrupted, by our falling into the snare of self-complacency.

Above all, there is that great adversary who "goeth about as a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour." He avails himself of the world, and the flesh, and the infirmities of the spirit, to tempt the soul of sin. This is no fable, altho one of Satan's most skilful stratagems is to make men disbelieve in his exis-

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tence. Overlooked or despised, a foe is already half victorious. But the Captain of our Salvation, in His word, often warns us both of the craft and of the violence of our adversary. We sometimes read of "the wiles of the devil"; and sometimes of "the fiery darts of the wicked one." They who fail to watch and pray, are sure to be vanquished by such a foe.

These are our enemies! And if we would possess the promise we must "overcome." A mere profession of religion is of no avail. It is not enough for our name to appear on the muster-roll of the camp. Many wear the soldier's dress who know nothing of the soldier's heart. Many are glad to glitter on the grand parade who fall off from the hard-fought, blood-stained battle-field. It is not enough to buckle on our armor; many do this, and lay it aside again. We must devote ourselves to this great daily battle of life.

There is no exemption of persons. Women must fight, as well as men; the tender and timid must be as Amazons in the conflict. Children must carry the shield, and wield the sword. The aged and infirm must keep the ranks. The sick and wounded must not be carried to the rear. No substitute can be provided, and there is no discharge in this war.

There is no exemption on account of circumstances. The rich and poor, the learned and

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the unlearned, the cheerful and the sad, all must fight. No accumulation of trouble, no unexpected death of friends, can be an excuse for laying down our arms. We must go to the marriage feast, and we must attend the funeral procession, as warriors, wearing our armor and grasping our weapons. We must be like those spoken of by Nehemiah, "every man with one hand wrought in the work, and with the other hand held a weapon."

There is no exemption of place. Foes lie in wait for the Christian wherever he goes—in the mart of commerce, in the busy workshop, when he returns to his home, when he rests on his bed, in the bustle of the day, in the silence of the night, in the circle of his friends, in the bosom of his family, in society, alone, in the city, in the fields, in his walks of benevolence, in his private meditations, in the church, in his secret retirement, when he worships with the great congregation, and when he enters his closet and shuts the door. He can never elude the enemy; he carries the foe in his own breast; the conflict ceases not!

There is no exemption of time, no season of rest. No truce is sounded. Satan never beats a retreat, except to lead us into an ambuscade. No white flag comes out that can be trusted. If we parley it is at our peril; if we pause, we are wounded or taken captive. Wars on earth may often terminate by mutual agreement. It is a war of extermination; no quarter is

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given; either we must trample Satan under foot, or Satan will drag us down to hell!

It is a warfare until death. While we are in the body it will be always true—"We wrestle." The oldest Christian cannot lay aside his weapons. "Having done all, stand." A great word that! "Having done all!" "What!" you may say, "after a long life of conflict, surely I may put aside my armor, and sheathe my sword, and recline on some sunny bank, and enjoy myself after my victory!"

No; you must not expect it; "having done all" it is enough if you stand at bay on the battle-ground; all you can hope for in this world is to maintain your post, still defying the foe, who will be still meditating fresh attacks. You will never be able to say with St. Paul, "I have finished my course."

It is not the appearance of fighting. It is not a few faint, irresolute strokes. "So fight I," said the Apostle, "not as one that beateth the air." We must be resolute, determined, in earnest, giving our enemy no advantage. We must "not give place to the devil." We must watch against the smallest beginnings of sin. By "keeping the heart with all diligence," by putting on "the whole armor of God, "by having faith as our shield, righteousness as our breastplate, the hope of salvation as our helmet, by keeping "the sword of the Spirit" bright with exercise, "praying

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with all prayer," standing near our Captain, looking to Him, relying upon Him, knowing that "without Him we can do nothing,"—so must we fight! All this is necessary, if we would overcome.

It is not so easy to fight this fight as some suppose. It is not a true faith merely, an evangelical creed, a scriptural church, a comfortable sermon once or twice a week, a little Sabbath-keeping, an agreeable pause in your pleasures, giving to them a new relish—it is not this which constitutes Christianity. You that think religion so very easy a thing, have a care at least, lest when too late, you find that you know not what true religion meant.

Easy? A depraved being to trample upon his lusts—a proud being to lie prostrate with humility and self-reproach—they that are "slow of heart to believe," to receive the gospel as little children?

Easy? To "crucify the flesh," "to deny ungodliness," "to cut off a right hand, and to pluck out a right eye"?

Easy? To be in the world, and yet not of the world—to come out from it, not by the seclusion of the cloister, but by holiness of life—to be diligent in its duties, yet not absorbed by them; appreciating its innocent delights, and yet not ensnared by them; beholding its attractions and yet rising superior to them?

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Easy? To live surrounded by objects which appeal to the sight, and yet to endure as seeing what is invisible?

Easy? To pray and see no answer to prayer, and still pray on—to fight this battle, and find fresh foes ever rising up, yet still to fight on—to be harassed with doubts and fears, and yet walk on in darkness, tho we see no light, staying ourselves upon God?

Easy? To be preparing for a world we have never visited, in opposition to so much that is captivating in a world where we have always dwelt, whose beauties we have seen, whose music we have heard, whose pleasures we have experienced?

Easy? To resist that subtle foe who has cast down so many of the wise and the mighty?

Easy? When Jesus says it is a "strait gate," and that if we would enter we must "strive," bidding us "take up our cross daily, deny ourselves and follow him"? Ah! it is no soft flowery meadow, along which we may languidly stroll, but a rough, craggy cliff that we must climb. "To him that overcometh!" It is no smooth, placid stream, along which we may dreamily float, but a tempestuous ocean we must stem. "To him that overcometh!" It is no easy lolling in a cushioned chariot, that bears us on without fatigue and peril. The trumpet has sounded to arms; it is not peace, but war, war for liberty, war for life, on the issue of which

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our everlasting destiny depends! If we are to be saved, we must "overcome."

But tho the conflict is arduous, the encouragments are great. We have armor of proof. We have a mighty Champion. Victory is ensured to the brave. Others who stood on the same battle-field and fought with the same enemies, are now enjoying an eternal triumph. Not one faithful warrior ever perished. Their foes were not fewer than ours, their strength was not greater. They overcame by the same "blood of the Lamb" on which we rely.

> "Once they were mourning here below,
> And wet their couch with tears;
> They wrestled hard, as we do now,
> With sins, and doubts, and fears."

But they are wearing their crowns, they are enjoying their rest; and the feeblest and most unworthy of our own day, trusting in the same Savior, shall inherit the same promise. Then let us overcome. Sheathe not the sword, and it shall never be wrested from you; lay not down the shield, and no fiery dart shall ever penetrate it; face the foe, and he shall never trample you down, never drive you back.

Listen to your Captain; how He animates you onward! Look to the crown he is ready to bestow upon you; eat of the hidden manna which He gives; read the name in the "white

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stone,"—the name of God,—His name of love, recorded for your encouragement; and thus be animated to walk worthy of this holy alliance, and not to allow the foe to wrench from you such an assurance of divine favor, such a passport to heavenly bliss.

A little more conflict, and that "white stone" shall introduce you to the inheritance above, where, in the everlasting repose of the inner sanctuary, you shall without intermission eat of the hidden manna.

"Then let my soul march boldly on,
Press forward to the heavenly gate;
There peace and joy eternal reign,
And glittering robes for conquerors wait."

Some of you may consider this subject visionary and unreal. You say, "I know nothing of this warfare. I know what the conflict of business is, the race of fashion, the bustle of toil or pleasure; but to anxiety about spiritual things I am a stranger."

You are enjoying peace—but—what peace? There is a captive in a dungeon—his limbs are fast chained to the walls—yet he is singing songs. How is it? Satan has given him to drink of his drugged cup, and he does not know where he is. Look at that other. He says, "it is peace." There is truly no fighting, but he is groveling in the dust, and the heel of his foe is upon his neck. Such is the peace of every one going on in his wickedness,

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unpardoned and unsaved. "Taken captive by the devil at his will."

Chained in Satan's boat, you are swiftly gliding down the stream to ruin, and because it is smooth, you dream that it is safe! What is the difference between the saint and the sinner? Not that in the saint there is no sin. Not that in the sinner there is never a thought about God. The difference is this—that the saint is overcoming his sin; but the sin is overcoming the sinner. Oh, what a terrible thing if sin have the upper hand! No "hidden manna" is yours. The symbols of religion you may look at, but real religion must be a stranger to you. You know not its enjoyment. You do not taste it. It is a hidden thing. Heaven too will be hidden. You hear of its gates of pearl—but they will never open to you. You may catch the distant accents of its songs—but in those songs you will never join. And that "white stone" cannot be yours. You have no joyful anticipation of heaven—but a fearful looking-for of fiery indignation—or else the insensate resolve not to think at all. And the "new name"—no! you cannot read it! You know God by no such name as makes you seek His company. The thought of Him renders you unhappy, and therefore you banish it from your mind. You are not now alarmed, but soon the spell may be broken, and you may find the chains riveted upon your soul forever.

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I fancy I hear you say, "I wish that before it is too late, I could escape! But mine is a hopeless case. My heart is hardened against the gospel, and evil habit has so got the mastery over me, that I have no power to begin this conflict!"

No, you have no power; but One has visited this world, and taken our nature, who can help you. The mighty Son of God became the suffering Son of Man that He might be the liberator of our enslaved race. He burst open the prison doors, that captive souls might escape. He stands near you, ready to break off your fetters and strengthen you to fight the enemy who has so long opprest you. Tell Him your simple but sad tale; how helpless, how miserable, how ruined you are! Tell Him you want to be saved, but know not how to begin the work, and ask Him both to begin and complete it for you! Let your prayer be this: "Be merciful to me, a sinner"; and He who "came to destroy the works of the devil," He "whose nature and property is ever to have mercy and to forgive," will receive your "humble petitions; and tho you be tied and bound with the chain of your sins, He, in the pitifulness of His great mercy, will loose you."

He will pardon your past shameful concessions to the foe, and, arraying you in "the whole armor of God," and animating you with His Holy Spirit, He will enable you so to

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fight against the world, the flesh, and the devil, that you also shall share in the prize of them that overcome; you also shall eat of the "hidden manna," and receive the "white stone."

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ROBERTSON

THE LONELINESS OF CHRIST

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

FREDERICK WILLIAM ROBERTSON, was born in London in 1816, educated at Edinburgh University and took his degree at Oxford in 1841. From a law office he passed into the ministry, where his career, tho brief, was exceptionally brilliant. His English style commends itself to the preacher's study for its naturalness, poetic beauty, lucidity, and strength. It is the style of a man of unique genius. He died of consumption at Brighton in 1853, little more than thirty-six years of age.

Perhaps the most remarkable feature in the career of Robertson was the influence he exercised over the workingmen. This class had in his day become estranged from the Church of England, few of whose clergy had any power to attract their attention and adherence. He was denounced as a socialist because of his foundation of a workingmen's institute, and the opposition and vilification which he thus met with no doubt helped to shorten his life.

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ROBERTSON

1816—1853

THE LONELINESS OF CHRIST

Jesus answered them, Do ye now believe? Behold, the hour cometh, yea, is now come, that ye shall be scattered every man to his own, and shall leave me alone; and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me. —John xvi., 31, 32.

THERE are two kinds of solitude: the first consisting of isolation in space; the other, of isolation of the spirit. The first is simply separation by distance. When we are seen, touched, heard by none, we are said to be alone. And all hearts respond to the truth of that saying, This is not solitude; for sympathy can people our solitude with a crowd. The fisherman on the ocean alone at night is not alone, when he remembers the earnest longings which are rising up to heaven at home for his safety. The traveler is not alone, when the faces which will greet him on his arrival seem to beam upon him as he trudges on. The solitary student is not alone, when he feels that human hearts will respond to the truths which he is preparing to address to them.

The other is loneliness of soul. There are times when hands touch ours, but only send

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an icy chill of unsympathizing indifference to the heart; when eyes gaze into ours, but with a glazed look which can not read into the bottom of our souls; when words pass from our lips, but only come back as an echo reverberated without reply through a dreary solitude; when the multitude throng and press us, and we can not say, as Christ said, "Somebody hath touched me"; for the contact has been not between soul and soul, but only between form and form.

And there are two kinds of men, who feel this last solitude in different ways. The first are the men of self-reliance—self-dependent—who ask no counsel, and crave no sympathy; who act and resolve alone, who can go sternly through duty, and scarcely shrink, let what will be crushed in them. Such men command respect: for whoever respects himself constrains the respect of others. They are invaluable in all those professions of life in which sensitive feeling would be a superfluity; they make iron commanders, surgeons who do not shrink, and statesmen who do not flinch from their purpose for the dread of unpopularity. But mere self-dependence is weakness; and the conflict is terrible when a human sense of weakness is felt by such men. Jacob was alone when he slept on his way to Padan Aram, the first night that he was away from his father's roof, with the world before him, and all the old broken up; and Elijah was

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alone in the wilderness when the court had deserted him, and he said, "They have digged down thine altars, and slain thy prophets with the sword: and I, even I, only am left, and they seek my life to take it away." But the loneliness of the tender Jacob was very different from that of the stern Elijah. To Jacob the sympathy he yearned for was realized in the form of a gentle dream. A ladder raised from earth to heaven figured the possibility of communion between the spirit of man and the Spirit of God. In Elijah's case, the storm, and the earthquake, and the fire did their convulsing work in the soul, before a still, small voice told him that he was not alone. In such a spirit the sense of weakness comes with a burst of agony, and the dreadful conviction of being alone manifests itself with a rending of the heart of rock. It is only so that such souls can be taught that the Father is with them, and that they are not alone.

There is another class of men, who live in sympathy. These are affectionate minds, which tremble at the thought of being alone; not from want of courage nor from weakness of intellect comes their dependence upon others, but from the intensity of their affections. It is the trembling spirit of humanity in them. They want not aid, not even countenance, but only sympathy. And then trial comes to them not in the shape of fierce strug-

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gle, but of chill and utter loneliness, when they are called upon to perform a duty on which the world looks coldly, or to embrace a truth which has not found lodgment yet in the breasts of others.

It is to this latter and not to the former class that we must look, if we could understand the spirit in which the words of the text were pronounced. The deep humanity of the soul of Christ was gifted with those finer sensibilities of affectionate nature which stand in need of sympathy. He not only gave sympathy, but wanted it, too, from others. He who selected the gentle John to be His friend, who found solace in female sympathy, attended by the women who ministered to Him out of their substance—who in the trial hour could not bear even to pray without the human presence, which is the pledge and reminder of God's presence, had nothing in Him of the hard, merely self-dependent character. Even this verse testifies to the same fact. A stern spirit never could have said, "I am not alone: the Father is with me"; never would have felt the loneliness which needed the balancing truth. These words tell of a struggle, an inward reasoning, a difficulty and a reply, a sense of solitude—"I shall be alone"; and an immediate correction of that: "Not alone: the Father is with me."

There is no thought connected with the life of Christ more touching, none that seems

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so peculiarly to characterize His spirit, as the solitariness in which He lived. Those who understood Him best only understood Him half. Those who knew Him best scarcely could be said to know Him. On this occasion the disciples thought, Now we do understand, now we do believe. The lonely spirit answered, "Do ye now believe? Behold the hour cometh that ye shall be scattered, every man to his own, and shall leave me alone."

Very impressive is that trait in His history. He was in this world alone.

I. First, then, we meditate on the loneliness of Christ.

The loneliness of Christ was caused by the divine elevation of His character. His infinite superiority severed Him from sympathy; His exquisite affectionateness made that want of sympathy a keen trial.

There is a second-rate greatness which the world can comprehend. If we take two who are brought into direct contrast by Christ Himself, the one the type of human, the other that of divine excellence, the Son of Man and John the Baptist, this becomes clearly manifest. John's life had a certain rude, rugged goodness, on which was written, in characters which required no magnifying-glass to read, spiritual excellence. The world, on the whole, accepted him. Pharisees and Sadducees went to his baptism. The people idolized him as a prophet; and, if he had not chanced to cross

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the path of a weak prince and a revengeful woman, we can see no reason why John might not have finished his course with joy, recognized as irreproachable. If we inquire why it was that the world accepted John and rejected Christ, one reply appears to be, that the life of the one was infinitely simple and one-sided, that of the other divinely complex. In physical nature, the naturalist finds no difficulty in comprehending the simple structure of the lowest organizations of animal life, where one uniform texture, and one organ performing the office of brain and heart and lungs, at once, leave little to perplex. But when he comes to study the complex anatomy of men, he has the labor of a lifetime before him. It is not difficult to master the constitution of a single country; but when you try to understand the universe, you find infinite appearances of contradiction: law opposed by law; motion balanced by motion; happiness blended with misery; and the power to elicit a divine order and unity out of this complex variety is given to only a few of the gifted of the race. That which the structure of man is to the structure of the limpet, that which the universe is to a single country, the complex and boundless soul of Christ was to the souls of other men. Therefore, to the superficial observer, His life was a mass of inconsistencies and contradictions. All thought themselves qualified to point out the discrepancies. The Pharisees

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could not comprehend how a holy Teacher could eat with publicans and sinners. His own brethren could not reconcile His assumption of a public office with the privacy which He aimed at keeping. "If thou doest these things, show thyself to the world." Some thought He was "a good man"; others said, "Nay, but he deceiveth the people." And hence it was that He lived to see all that acceptance which had marked the earlier stage of His career—as, for instance, at Capernaum —melt away. First, the Pharisees took the alarm; then the Sadducees; then the political party of the Herodians; then the people. That was the most terrible of all: for the enmity of the upper classes is impotent; but when that cry of brute force is stirred from the deeps of society, as deaf to the voice of reason as the ocean in its strength churned into raving foam by the winds, the heart of mere earthly oak quails before that. The apostles, at all events, did quail. One denied; another betrayed; all deserted. They "were scattered, each to his own": and the Truth Himself was left alone in Pilate's judgment hall.

Now learn from this a very important distinction. To feel solitary is no uncommon thing. To complain of being alone, without sympathy, and misunderstood, is general enough. In every place, in many a family, these victims of diseased sensibility are to be found, and they might find a weakening satis-

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faction in observing a parallel between their own feelings and those of Jesus. But before that parallel is assumed, be very sure that it is, as in His case, the elevation of your character which severs you from your species. The world has small sympathy for divine goodness; but it also has little for a great many other qualities which are disagreeable to it. You meet with no response; you are passed by; find yourself unpopular; meet with little communion. Well! Is that because you are above in the world—nobler, devising and executing grand plans, which they can not comprehend; vindicating the wronged; proclaiming and living on great principles; offending it by the saintliness of your purity, and the unworldliness of your aspirations? Then yours is the loneliness of Christ. Or is it that you are wrapped up in self, cold, disobliging, sentimental, indifferent about the welfare of others, and very much astonished that they are not deeply interested in you? You must not use these words of Christ. They have nothing to do with you.

Let us look at one or two of the occasions on which this loneliness was felt.

The first time was when He was but twelve years old, when His parents found Him in the temple, hearing the doctors and asking them questions. High thoughts were in the Child's soul: expanding views of life; larger views of duty, and His own destiny.

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There is a moment in every true life—to some it comes very early—when the old routine of duty is not large enough; when the parental roof seems too low, because the Infinite above is arching over the soul; when the old formulas, in creeds, catechisms, and articles, seem to be narrow, and they must either be thrown aside, or else transformed into living and breathing realities; when the earthly father's authority is being superseded by the claims of a Father in Heaven.

That is a lonely, lonely moment, when the young soul first feels God—when this earth is recognized as an "awful place, yea, the very gate of heaven"; when the dream-ladder is seen planted against the skies, and we wake, and the dream haunts us as a sublime reality.

You may detect the approach of that moment in the young man or the young woman by the awakened spirit of inquiry; by a certain restlessness of look, and an eager earnestness of tone; by the devouring study of all kinds of books; by the waning of your own influence, while the inquirer is asking the truth of the doctors and teachers in the vast temple of the world; by a certain opinionativeness, which is austere and disagreeable enough; but the austerest moment of the fruit's taste is that in which it is passing from greenness into ripeness. If you wait in patience, the sour will become sweet. Rightly looked at, that opinionativeness is more truly

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anguish; the fearful solitude of feeling the insecurity of all that is human; the discovery that life is real, and forms of social and religious existence hollow. The old moorings are torn away, and the soul is drifting, drifting, drifting, very often without compass, except the guidance of an unseen hand, into the vast infinite of God. Then come the lonely words, and no wonder. "How is it that ye sought me? Wist ye not that I must be about my Father's business?"

That solitude was felt by Christ in trial. In the desert, in Pilate's judgment hall, in the garden, He was alone; and alone must every son of man meet his trial-hour. The individuality of the soul necessitates that. Each man is a new soul in this world: untried, with a boundless "Possible" before him. No one can predict what he may become, prescribe his duties, or mark out his obligations. Each man's own nature has its own peculiar rules; and he must take up his life-plan alone, and persevere in it in a perfect privacy with which no stranger intermeddleth. Each man's temptations are made up of a host of peculiarities, internal and external, which no other mind can measure. You are tried alone; alone you pass into the desert; alone you must bear and conquer in the agony; alone you must be sifted by the world. There are moments known only to a man's own self, when he sits by the poisoned springs of existence, "yearn-

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ing for a morrow which shall free him from strife." And there are trials more terrible than that. Not when vicious inclinations are opposed to holy, but when virtue conflicts with virtue, is the real rending of the soul in twain. A temptation, in which the lower nature struggles for mastery, can be met by the whole united force of the spirit. But it is when obedience to a heavenly Father can be only paid by disobedience to an earthly one; or fidelity to duty can be only kept by infidelity to some entangling engagement; or the straight path must be taken over the misery of others; or the counsel of the affectionate friend must be met with a "Get thee behind me, Satan":—Oh! it is then, when human advice is unavailable, that the soul feels what it is to be alone.

Once more: the Redeemer's soul was alone in dying. The hour had come—they were all gone, and He was, as He predicted, left alone. All that is human drops from us in that hour. Human faces flit and fade, and the sounds of the world become confused. "I shall die alone"—yes, and alone you live. The philosopher tells us that no atom in creation touches another atom; they all approach within a certain distance; then the attraction ceases, and an invisible something repels—they only seem to touch. No soul touches another soul except at one or two points, and those chiefly external—a fearful and lonely thought, but

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one of the truest of life. Death only realizes that which has been fact all along. In the central deeps of our being we are alone.

II. The spirit or temper of that solitude.

Observe its grandeur. I am alone, yet not alone. This is a feeble and sentimental way in which we speak of the Man of sorrows. We turn to the cross, and the agony, and the loneliness, to touch the softer feelings, to arouse compassion. You degrade that loneliness by your compassion. Compassion! compassion for Him! Adore if you will—respect and reverence that sublime solitariness with which none but the Father was—but no pity; let it draw out the firmer and manlier graces of the soul. Even tender sympathy seems out of place.

For even in human beings, the strength that is in a man can only be learnt when he is thrown upon his own resources and left alone. What a man can do in conjunction with others does not test the man. Tell us what he can do alone. It is one thing to defend the truth when you know that your audience are already prepossest, and that every argument will meet a willing response; and it is another thing to hold the truth when truth must be supported, if at all, alone—met by cold looks and unsympathizing suspicion. It is one thing to rush on to danger with the shouts and the sympathy of numbers; it is another thing when the lonely chieftain of the sinking

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ship sees the last boat-full disengage itself, and folds his arms to go down into the majesty of darkness, crushed, but not subdued.

Such and greater far was the strength and majesty of the Savior's solitariness. It was not the trial of the lonely hermit. There is a certain gentle and pleasing melancholy in the life which is lived alone. But there are the forms of nature to speak to him; and he has not the positive opposition of mankind, if he has the absence of actual sympathy. It is a solemn thing, doubtless, to be apart from men, and to feel eternity rushing by like an arrowy river. But the solitude of Christ was the solitude of a crowd. In that single human bosom dwelt the thought which was to be the germ of the world's life, a thought unshared, misunderstood, or rejected. Can you not feel the grandeur of those words, when the Man, reposing on His solitary strength, felt the last shadow of perfect isolation pass across His soul:—"My God, my God, why hast thou forsaken me?"

Next, learn from these words self-reliance. "Ye shall leave me alone." Alone, then, the Son of Man was content to be. He threw Himself on His own solitary thought: did not go down to meet the world; but waited, tho it might be for ages, till the world should come round to Him. He appealed to the future, did not aim at seeming consistent, left His contradictions unexplained: I came from the

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Father: I leave the world, and go to the Father. "Now," said they, "Thou speakest no proverb"; that is enigma. But many a hard and enigmatical saying before He had spoken, and He left them all. A thread runs through all true acts, stringing them together into one harmonious chain: but it is not for the Son of God to be anxious to prove their consistency with each other.

This is self-reliance, to repose calmly on the thought which is deepest in our bosoms, and be unmoved if the world will not accept it yet. To live on your own convictions against the world, is to overcome the world—to believe that what is truest in you is true for all: to abide by that, and not be over-anxious to be heard or understood, or sympathized with, certain that at last all must acknowledge the same, and that, while you stand firm, the world will come round to you, that is independence. It is not difficult to get away into retirement, and there live upon your own convictions; nor is it difficult to mix with men, and follow their convictions; but to enter into the world, and there live out firmly and fearlessly according to your own conscience—that is Christian greatness.

There is a cowardice in this age which is not Christian. We shrink from the consequences of truth. We look round and cling dependently. We ask what men will think; what others will say; whether they will stare

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in astonishment. Perhaps they will; but he who is calculating that will accomplish nothing in this life. The Father—the Father which is with us and in us—what does He think? God's work can not be done without a spirit of independence. A man has got some way in the Christian life when he has learned to say humbly, and yet majestically, "I dare to be alone."

Lastly, remark the humility of this loneliness. Had the Son of Man simply said, I can be alone, He would have said no more than any proud, self-relying man can say; but when He added, "because the Father is with me," that independence assumed another character, and self-reliance became only another form of reliance upon God. Distinguish between genuine and spurious humility. There is a false humility which says, "It is my own poor thought, and I must not trust it. I must distrust my own reason and judgment, because they are my own. I must not accept the dictates of my own conscience; for is it not my own, and is not trust in self the great fault of our fallen nature?"

Very well. Now, remember something else. There is a Spirit which beareth witness in our spirits; there is a God who "is not far from any one of us"; there is a "Light which lighteth every man which cometh into the world." Do not be unnaturally humble. The thought of your own mind perchance is the thought

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of God. To refuse to follow that may be to disown God. To take the judgment and conscience of other men to live by, where is the humility of that? From whence did their conscience and judgment come? Was the fountain from which they drew exhausted for you? If they refused like you to rely on their own conscience, and you rely upon it, how are you sure that it is more the mind of God than your own which you have refused to hear?

Look at it in another way. The charm of the words of great men—those grand sayings which are recognized as true as soon as heard—is this, that you recognize them as wisdom which passed across your own mind. You feel that they are your own thoughts come back to you, else you would not at once admit them: "All that floated across me before, only I could not say it, and did not feel confident enough to assert it, or had not conviction enough to put into words." Yes, God spoke to you what He did to them: only they believed it, said it, trusted the Word within them, and you did not. Be sure that often when you say, "It is only my own poor thought, and I am alone," the real correcting thought is this, "Alone, but the Father is with me,"—therefore I can live by that lonely conviction.

There is no danger in this, whatever timid minds may think—no danger of mistake, if the character be a true one. For we are not

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in uncertainty in this matter. It has been given us to know our base from our noble hours: to distinguish between the voice which is from above, and that which speaks from below, out of the abyss of our animal and selfish nature. Samuel could distinguish between the impulse—quite a human one—which would have made him select Eliab out of Jesse's sons, and the deeper judgment by which "the Lord said, Look not on his countenance, nor on the height of his stature, for I have refused him." Doubtless deep truth of character is required for this: for the whispering voices get mixed together, and we dare not abide by our own thoughts, because we think them our own, and not God's: and this because we only now and then endeavor to know in earnest. It is only given to the habitually true to know the difference. He knew it, because all His blessed life long He could say, "My judgment is just, because I seek not my own will, but the will of him who sent me."

The practical result and inference of all this is a very simple, but a very deep one: the deepest of existence. Let life be a life of faith. Do not go timorously about, inquiring what others think, and what others believe, and what others say. It seems the easiest, it is the most difficult thing in life to do this. Believe in God. God is near you. Throw yourself fearlessly upon Him. Trembling mortal, there

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is an unknown light within your soul, which will wake when you command it. The day may come when all that is human, man and woman, will fall off from you; as they did from Him. Let His strength be yours. Be independent of them all now. The Father is with you. Look to Him, and He will save you.

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HITCHCOCK

ETERNAL ATONEMENT

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

ROSWELL DWIGHT HITCHCOCK was born at East Machias, Maine, in 1817. To his pulpit delivery, which was direct, fluent and impressive, he brought the results of profound Bible research. He was an evangelical transcendentalist, and for many years addressed large and cultured congregations in New York City. As a teacher he was clear and inspiring, particularly in historical theology. In 1880 he was made president of the Union Theological Seminary. His best-known work is the "Complete Analysis of the Bible." He died in 1887.

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HITCHCOCK

1817—1887

ETERNAL ATONEMENT[1]

And all that dwell upon the earth shall worship him, whose names are not written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.—Revelation xiii., 8.

My subject is the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. My text is Revelation xiii., 8, the precise import of which is disputed; and I will therefore give you the rival renderings. As we have been used to it in the Authorized Version, it reads: "Written in the book of life of the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world." The Anglican revisers, following the lead of Alford, make no essential change: "Written in the book of life of the Lamb that hath been slain from the foundation of the world." The American revisers, following the lead of Bengel, De Wette, and many others, would have it: "Written from the foundation of the world in the book of life of the Lamb that hath been slain." The American rendering makes

[1] From Dr. Hitchcock's book of the same title by permission of the publishers. Messrs. Charles Scribner's Sons.

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the election eternal. The Anglican rendering makes the atonement eternal.

The prevalent opinion no doubt has been that the atonement is simply an historic fact, dating back now some nineteen hundred years; and that only the purpose of it is eternal. But Johann Wessel, the great German theologian, who died only six years after Martin Luther was born, got hold of the idea that not election only, but atonement also, is an eternal act. And this, it seems to me, is both rational and scriptural. Eternal election, profoundly considered, requires eternal atonement for its support. Both are eternal, as all divine realities are eternal. If the passage in Revelation were given up, we should still have to deal with 1 Peter i., 19, 20, where the Lamb is spoken of as foreknown before the foundation of the world, but manifested at the end of the times; eternal reality becoming temporal fact. We should still have to deal with John xvii., 24, which also carries back into eternity the redeeming relationship between the Father and the Son. Even on Calvary, as temporal actuality, the Lamb slain is only a figure of speech, and, of course, it can be no more than a figure of speech as eternal reality in the bosom of God. But whether in time, or in eternity—whether on Calvary or in the bosom of God, the figure must stand for something. For us the meaning is, and must be, that not election only, but

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atonement also, is eternal. And so the relationship of God to moral evil stands forth as an eternal relationship. Not that evil is itself eternal; but God always knew it and always felt it. It may help our thinking in this direction to remember that there is a sense in which creation itself is eternal; not independently eternal, but, of God's will, dependently eternal.

There must nothing be said, or thought, in mitigation of the ethical verdict against moral evil. The hatefulness of it, no matter what its chronology may be, is simply unspeakable. Violated law is monstrous. Unmindfulness of God, who has always been so mindful of us, is mean. Never to pray, either in one's closet or in one's family, is against all the proprieties. Idolatry is childish and contemptible. Profaneness of speech is scandalous. Neglect of holy time is robbery. Disobedience to parents is shameful. Murder is hideous. Unchastity murders the soul, is indeed both murder and suicide. And so of all the rest. Theft, falsehood, and even inordinate desire are abominable. Imagine a community, larger or smaller—a family, a township, a state, or a nation—where the Ten Commandments are persistently trampled under foot, and you will have imagined a community intolerable even to itself. And if this be our human judgment, what must the divine judgment be? The more pure and righteous a moral being is,

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the more squarely he must antagonize, more intensely he must hate, the more surely he must punish impurity and unrighteousness. Volcanic fire inside the globe, forked lightning outside of it, are faint emblems of holy wrath. Wrong doing is the one thing nowhere, and never, to be either condoned or endured. Physical accident, bodily sickness, financial disaster, social bereavement, may all be pitied. But when a thoroughly bad man stands revealed, only lightning is logical. He that sows the wind ought to reap the whirlwind. It was a great philosopher who stood amazed at the starry sky, and at the moral sense in man. Well he might. There is no softness in the midnight sky; only cold blue marble, and a steady blaze that never relents, and is never tired. You can not endure that blaze, you dare not risk yourself out alone among those gleaming orbs with a guilty secret in your bosom. The universe is instinct with law that never abdicates. Remorse is not repentance; and even repentance washes out no stain. Self-forgiveness is impossible. The trumpet is always sounding; every day is a judgment-day; and every one of us goes to the left. Gehenna is the only logical goal of sin.

Nor should any attempt be made to get at the genesis of moral evil. The beginning of it is simply inconceivable. The whole thing is a mystery and must be let alone. Moral evil is not eternal; or there would be two infinities.

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Nor is it a creature of God; or God would be divided against Himself. And yet it had the divine permission, whatever that may be imagined to have been. With every attribute roused and alert—infinity of power, infinity of wisdom, infinity of holiness—God stood by and let evil enter. Angels revolted first, somewhere among the stars. Mankind revolted. Was evil really unavoidable in a proper moral system? If so, immorality is not immoral. Evil that is really essential to good should not be considered evil. It would be only the bitter bud of the fragrant blossom and the luscious fruit. Or, putting it in another form, will you say that God could not have prevented evil? He certainly could have prevented it. In Heaven to-day, what is the security of saints and angels, of your own dear sainted mother, of Gabriel himself, but God's own grace constraining the will of every saint, constraining the will of every seraph? What is human sin but the abuse of human appetites, of human passions, of human faculties, in themselves all innocent? Study the lesson of our Lord's temptation in the desert. Certainly, He was not tempted as we are, by inflamed appetites and passions, by impaired and disordered faculties. But He possest all these natural appetites, passions, and faculties; and they were put to a real and a tremendous strain. That "great duel," as Milton calls it, was no sham fight; one or the

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other had to go down. Christ was gnawed by hunger, but refused to eat. He saw what might be done by a brilliant miracle towards inaugurating His Jewish ministry, but refused to work it. He saw the short, Satanic path to Messianic dominion, but chose Gethsemane and Calvary. Now the first Adam was just as cool and just as innocent as the second Adam. And, with more of grace to strengthen him, he too might have stood. There was no real necessity for that first human disobedience. It was sheer, wanton, gratuitous, inexplicable apostasy. Somewhat more of divine constraint, and the catastrophe would certainly have been averted. Call it non-prevention, call it permission, call it anything you please, somehow sin entered in spite of God's hating it. It came knocking for admission, and God's shoulder was not against the gate. For some reason, or reasons, not revealed, perhaps not revealable, God thought it best not to put His shoulder against the gate. The hateful and hated thing pushed through. Ormuzd let in Ahriman. I thank the Persian for these two words. They embody and emphasize the historic dualism of good and evil. The historic dualism, you will observe I say; there is no other dualism. God is One; and Master of all. The divine permission of hateful and hated evil, when we fairly apprehend it, is a tremendous statement, which might well be challenged, were not the thing

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itself so undeniably a fact. This is as far as we can go. Here we halt, with our bruised and throbbing foreheads hard up against the granite cliff.

Practically, historic sin finds relief in historic redemption. Apparently, there was little, if any, interval between the two. Sin came, perhaps, with the noontide rest. "In the cool of the day"—that same day, most likely—the offended Lord came walking in the garden. The colloquy had a sharp beginning, but a mellow ending. The bitten heel would finally crush the biting head. And the struggle at once began. The Lord came down very close to His erring, guilty, frightened children. And they clung very closely to Him. We are in great danger of underrating that primitive economy of grace. The record is very brief, and the Oriental genius of it seems strange to us. But we see an altar there; and it can have but one meaning. Ages after, in all the nobler ethnic religions—Egyptian, Indian, Persian, and Pelasgic—we encounter echoes and survivals of that first vouchsafement of revelation. In all the great religions, we find one God; in all of them, personal immortality, with retribution; in most of them, divine triads; in two of them at least, the resurrection of the body. If it be true, as we may well believe, that Socrates is now in Heaven, singing the new song, it is because he sacrificed; and he sacrificed,

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whether he fully understood it or not, because of that colloquy in the garden. And if that sufficed for him, the Providence of God is justified. Historic sin is fairly matched, and overmatched, by historic redemption.

But the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world, suggests a far sublimer theodicy. We are taken back behind the human ages, behind all time, into awful infinite depths, into the very bosom of the triune God. Theological science recognizes two trinities, which it calls economic and essential. The former began with historic redemption, and kept pace with it. Father, Son, and Spirit stood for law, redemption, and regeneration. It was economic trinity that suggested essential trinity. But for the historic process, the question might not have seemed worth asking, whether God is one only, or three also, and the three in one. The Hebrew mind, as represented by Philo, was only just beginning to be trinitarian, when Christ's life in the flesh compelled the Hebrew mind, as represented by Peter, Paul, and John, to a new theology. After Pentecost, bald Unitarianism was anachronous. Christian experience logically required three divine persons, of one and the same divine essence. Economic trinity required essential trinity.

Essential trinity is anything but an arbitrary conception of God. Wyclif taught it at

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Oxford as a necessary doctrine of reason. Trinity is another name for the self-consciousness, and self-communion, of God. Father, Son, and Spirit are vastly more than the revelation of God to man; they are the revelation of God to Himself, and the intercourse of God with Himself. They suggest infinite fulness and richness of being. Our scientific definitions of God do not amount to much. At best, they formulate only very inadequate conceptions of Him. It is assumed that these scientific definitions of God take us farther than the Biblical descriptions of God. We had better not feel too sure of that. Attributes in action may impart a better knowledge than attributes abstractedly defined. Pictures for children may be better than creeds and catechisms. What we need is to see God in the life both of nature, and of man. This the Hebrew prophets enable us to do by their anthropomorphic and anthropopathic pictures of God. If you say the pictures are childish, then I must say that we are children, all of us, and had better be children. It is no real scandal to science to be told, that "the eyes of the Lord are in every place, beholding the evil and the good"; that "the eyes of the Lord are upon the righteous, and his ears are open unto their cry"; that the Lord "smelled a sweet savor" from Noah's altar; while wicked men are consumed by "the breath of his nostrils"; that "the voice of the Lord

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breaketh the cedars of Lebanon"; and He "walketh upon the wings of the wind"; and that at last, in the Messianic time, "the Lord will make bare his holy arm in the eyes of all the nations." God is not a mere aggregate of attributes. He has a personality as distinct and positive as yours and mine. But the personality is infinite in all its outgoings. God's being is a vast abyss which no plummet has ever sounded. Imagine all you can of boundless power, constantly at work; of boundless intelligence, constantly at work; of boundless passion, constantly at work: God is all that, and immeasurably more than that. What right has any one to say that God is passionless? God Himself has never said it. He is not passionless. Like the sun, He is all aflame; He rejoices in the truth; He hates a lie. He is pleased with what is right, and displeased with what is wrong. Good men are the apple of His eye; bad men His abomination and His scorn. Rendered literally, "God is a righteous Judge, and a God who is angry every day."

But God is love. So says John in that famous passage, over which the theologians are still disputing, whether the meaning be that love is only one of the divine attributes, or is that very essence of God, into which every other attribute may be resolved. Some of the profoundest thinkers of our day accept these three words of John, "God is love," as

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the final definition of God. Sunshine striking a teardrop may give us the seven colors of the rainbow; but the seven colors are all one blessed light. God creates, governs, judges, punishes, pities, redeems, and saves; but love is the root of all. It was love that created this wonderous universe, to which science can set no bounds. It was love that created angels, tho some of them rebelled, and were "delivered into chains of darkness." It was love that created this human brotherhood, all of whom have rebelled and gone astray. This rebellion was permitted; but was rebellion all the same. God feels it; and has always felt it. Absalom has broken his father's heart; and we are Absalom. The grand old King goes up over Olivet weeping, with his head covered, and his feet bare; and that King is God. Only He is the King Eternal, and His agony over sin is also eternal. This agony of God over human sin is the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. God Himself atones, to Himself atones; and so atonement is both eternal and divine.

In that matchless epitome of the gospel—that parable of the Prodigal Son, reported only by Luke—not a word is said, not a glimpse is given, of the father of the prodigal during all that interval between the departure and return. A veil is drawn over all those bitter, weary years. So has God yearned and suffered in the silent depths of His own eternity,

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waiting and watching for the repentant prodigal. This yearning, grieved, and suffering God is the God and Father of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ; Son of God, Son of Mary. This sinless Child should have had no griefs of His own. His sorrows could have been only those old eternal shadows of permitted sin. The cross on which He died, flinging out its arms as if to embrace the world, lifted up its head toward the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. Our hearts now go back to Calvary; and from Calvary they go up to God.

One word more. This stupendous idea of eternal atonement carries with it the idea of universal atonement. Whatever it was, and is, must needs have been infinite. No magnitude of sin, no multitude of sinners, can bankrupt its treasury of grace. "God so loved the world," is its everlasting refrain. "He that will, let him take of the water of life freely." "Take" is the word, my hearers. Let us remember this. There is something for us to do. God Himself can not pardon an impenitent offender. If pardon were offered, it could not be accepted. It is a law of our own being, that we must repent. O Lamb of God, slain so long ago, save us at last, when Thou comest in the clouds; and save us here to-day.

It is one of the revelations of Scripture that we are to judge the angels, sitting above them on the shining heights. It may well

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be so. Those angels are the imperial guard, doing easy duty at home. We are the "tenth legion," marching in from the swamps and forests of the far-off frontier; scarred and battered, but victorious over death and sin.[1]

Ten thousand times ten thousand
In sparkling raiment bright,
The armies of the ransom'd saints
Throng up the steps of light;
'Tis finish'd, all is finish'd,
Their fight with death and sin:
Fling open wide the golden gates,
And let the victors in.

[1] The following stanza from Dean Alford's grand hymn appears upon the last page of this, the last sermon written by Dr. Hitchcock. By a singular coincidence it was the stanza especially selected to be sung in the burial service at Dr. Hitchcock's funeral, altho in entire ignorance of its existence in the manuscript.

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KINGSLEY

THE SHAKING OF THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

CHARLES KINGSLEY was born at Holne Vicarage, Devonshire, in 1819. He was by temperament enthusiastic, impetuous, and great-hearted. His utterances were notable for their unusual earnestness. "I go at what I am about," he said, "as if there were nothing else in the world for the time being." In this way he completely lost himself in the work in hand. His favorite motto was "Be strong!" He had a poetic spirit, and was both vigorous and brilliant. He is known not only for his sermons and addresses, but also for his novels and some verse. He died in 1875.

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KINGSLEY

1819—1875

THE SHAKING OF THE HEAVENS AND THE EARTH

Yet once more I shake not the earth only, but also heaven. And this word, Yet once more, signifieth the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those which can not be shaken may remain. Wherefore we receiving a kingdom which can not be moved, let us have grace, whereby we may serve God acceptably with reverence and godly fear: for our God is a consuming fire.—Hebrews xii., 26-29.

THIS is one of the royal texts of Scripture. It is inexhaustible, like the God who inspired it. It has fulfilled itself again and again, at different epochs. It fulfilled itself specially and notoriously in the first century. But it fulfilled itself again in the fifth century; and again at the Crusades; and again at the Reformation in the sixteenth century. And it may be that it is fulfilling itself at this very day; that in this century, both in the time of our fathers and in our own, the Lord has been shaking the heavens and the earth, that those things which can be shaken may be removed, as things that are

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made, while those things which can not be shaken remain.

All confess this to be true, each in his own words. They talk of this age as one of change; of rapid progress, for good or evil; of unexpected discoveries; of revolutions, intellectual, moral, social, as well as political. Our notions of the physical universe are rapidly altering, with the new discoveries of science; and our notions of ethics and theology are altering as rapidly. The era assumes a different aspect to different minds, just as it did the first century after Christ, according as men look forward to the future with hope, or back to the past with regret. Some glory in the nineteenth century as one of rapid progress for good; as the commencement of a new era for humanity; as the inauguration of a Reformation as grand as that of the sixteenth century. Others bewail it as an age of rapid decay; in which the old landmarks are being removed, the old paths lost; in which we are rushing headlong into skepticism and atheism; in which the world and the Church are both in danger, and the last day is at hand.

Both parties may be right; and yet both may be wrong. Men have always talked thus, at great crises in the world's life. They talked thus in the first century; and in the fifth, and in the eleventh; and again in the sixteenth; and then both parties were partially right and partially wrong; and so they may

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be now. What they meant to say, what they wanted to say, what we mean and want to say, has been said already for us in far deeper, wider, and more accurate words, by him who wrote this wonderful Epistle to the Hebrews, when he told the Jews of his time that the Lord was shaking the heavens and the earth, that those things which were shaken might be removed, as things that are made—cosmogonies, systems, theories, prejudices, fashions, of man's invention: while those things which could not be shaken might remain, because they were according to the mind and will of God, eternal as that source from whence they came forth, even the bosom of God the Father.

"Yet once more I shake, not the earth only, but also heaven."

How has the earth been shaken in our days; and the heaven likewise. How rapidly have our conceptions of both altered. How easy, simple, certain, it all looked to our forefathers in the middle age. How difficult, complex, uncertain, it all looks to us. With increased knowledge has come—not increased doubt: that I deny utterly. I deny, once and for all, that this age is an irreverent age. I say that an irreverent age is one like the age of the Schoolmen; when men defined and explained all heaven and earth by à priori theories, and cosmogonies invented in the cloister; and dared, poor, simple, ignorant mortals, to fancy

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that they could comprehend and gauge the ways of Him whom the heaven and the heaven of heavens could not contain. This, this is irreverence: but it is neither irreverence nor want of faith, if a man, awed by the mystery which encompasses him from the cradle to the grave, shall lay his hand upon his mouth, with Job, and obey the Voice which cries to him from earth and heaven—"Be still, and know that as the heavens are higher than the earth, so are my ways higher than thy ways, and my thoughts higher than thine."

But it was all easy, and simple, and certain enough to our forefathers. The earth, according to the popular notion, was a flat plane; or, if it were, as the wiser held, a sphere, yet antipodes were an unscriptural heresy. Above it were the heavens, in which the stars were fixed, or wandered; and above them heaven after heaven, each tenanted by its own orders of beings, up to that heaven of heavens in which Deity—and by Him, be it always remembered, the mother of Deity—was enthroned.

And if above the earth was the kingdom of light, and purity, and holiness, what could be more plain, than that below it was the kingdom of darkness, and impurity, and sin? That was no theory to our forefathers: it was a physical fact. Had not even the heathens believed as much, and said so, by the

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mouth of the poet Virgil? He had declared that the mouth of Tartarus lay in Italy, hard by the volcanic lake Avernus; and after the unexpected eruption of Vesuvius in the first century, nothing seemed more clear than that Virgil was right; and that men were justified in talking of Tartarus, Styx, and Phlegethon as indisputable Christian entities. Etna, Stromboli, Hecla, were (according to this cosmogony) likewise mouths of hell; and there were not wanting holy hermits, who had heard from within those craters, shrieks, and clanking chains, and the howls of demons tormenting the souls of the endlessly lost.

Our forefathers were not aware that, centuries before the incarnation of our Lord, the Buddhist priests had held exactly the same theory of moral retribution; and that painted on the walls of Buddhist temples might be seen horrors identical with those which adorned the walls of many a Christian church, in the days when men believed in this Tartarology as firmly as they now believe in the results of chemistry or of astronomy.

And now—How is the earth shaken, and the heavens likewise, in that very sense in which the expression is used by him who wrote to the Hebrews? Our conceptions of them are shaken. How much of that mediæval cosmogony do educated men believe, in the sense in which they believe that the three

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angles of a triangle are equal to two right angles, or that if they steal their neighbor's goods they commit a sin?

The earth has been shaken for us, more and more violently, as the years have rolled on. It was shaken when astronomy told us that the earth was not the center of the universe, but a tiny planet revolving round a sun in a remote region thereof.

It was shaken, when geology told us that the earth had endured for countless ages, during which continents had become oceans, and oceans continents, again and again. And even now, it is being shaken by researches into the antiquity of man, into the origin and permanence of species, which, let the result be what it will, must in the meanwhile shake for us theories and dogmas which have been undisputed for 1500 years.

And with the rest of our cosmogony, that conception of a physical Tartarus below the earth has been shaken likewise, till good men have been fain to find a fresh place for it in the sun, or in a comet; or to patronize the probable, but as yet unproved theory of a central fire within the earth; not on any scientific grounds, but simply if by any means they can assign a region in space, wherein material torment can be inflicted on the spirits of the lost.

And meanwhile the heavens, the spiritual world, is being shaken no less. More and

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more frequently, more and more loudly, men are asking, not skeptics merely, but pious men, men who wish to be, and who believe themselves to be, orthodox Christians, more and more loudly are such men asking questions which demand an answer, with a learning and an eloquence, as well as with a devoutness and a reverence for Scripture, which—whether rightly or wrongly employed—is certain to command attention.

Rightly or wrongly, these men are asking, whether the actual and literal words of Scripture really involve the medieval theory of an endless Tartarus.

They are saying, "It is not we who deny, but you who assert, endless torments, who are playing fast and loose with the letter of Scripture. You are reading into it conceptions borrowed from Virgil, Dante, Milton, when you translate into the formula 'endless torment' such phrases as 'the outer darkness,' 'the fire of Gehenna,' the 'worm that dieth not'; which, according to all just laws of interpretation, refer not to the next life, but to this life, and specially to the approaching catastrophe of the Jewish nation; or when you say that eternal death really means eternal life—only life in torture."

Rightly or wrongly, they are saying this; and then they add, "We do not yield to you in love and esteem for Scripture. We demand not a looser, but a stricter; not a more meta-

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phoric, but a more literal; not a more contemptuous, but a more reverent interpretation thereof."

So these men speak, rightly or wrongly. And for good or for evil, they will be heard.

And with these questions others have arisen, not new at all, say these men, but to be found amid many contradictions, in the writings of all the best divines, when they have given up for a moment systems and theories, and listened to the voice of their own hearts; questions natural enough to an age which abhors cruelty, has abolished torture, labors for the reformation of criminals, and debates, rightly or wrongly, about abolishing capital punishment. Men are asking questions about the heaven, the spiritual world, and saying, "The spiritual world? Is it only another material world which happens to be invisible now, but which may become visible hereafter: or is it not rather the moral world—the world of right and wrong? Heaven? Is not the true and real heaven the kingdom of love, justice, purity, beneficence? Is not that the eternal heaven wherein God abides for ever, and with Him those who are like God? And hell? Is it not rather the anarchy of hate, injustice, impurity, uselessness; wherein abides all that is opposed to God?"

And with these thoughts come others about moral retribution—"What is its purpose? Can it, can any punishment have any right

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purpose save the correction, or the annihilation, of the criminal? Can God, in this respect, be at once less merciful and less powerful than men? Is He so controlled by necessity that He is forced to bring into the world beings whom he knows to be incorrigible, and doomed to endless misery? And if not so controlled, is not the alternative as to His character even more fearful? He bids us copy His justice, His love. Is that His justice, that His love, which if we copied, we should call each other, and deservedly, utterly unjust and unloving? Can there be one morality for God, and another for man, made in the image of God? Are these dark dogmas worthy of a Father who hateth nothing that He hath made, and is perfect in this, that He makes His sun shine on the evil and on the good, and His rain fall on the just and on the unjust, and is good to the unthankful and to the evil? Are they worthy of a Son who, in the fire of His divine charity, stooped from heaven to earth, to toil, to suffer, to die on the cross, that the world by Him might be saved? Are they worthy of that which proceeds from the Father and the Son, even that Spirit of boundless charity, and fervent love, by which the Son offered Himself to the Father, a sacrifice for the sins of the world—and surely not in vain?"

So men are asking, rightly or wrongly; and they are guarding themselves, at the same

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time, from the imputation of disbelief in moral retribution; of fancying God to be a careless, epicurean deity, cruelly indulgent to sin, and therefore, in so far, immoral.

They say—"We believe firmly enough in moral retribution. How can we help believing in it, while we see it working around us, in many a fearful shape, here, now, in this life? And we believe that it may work on, in still more fearful shapes, in the life to come. We believe that as long as a sinner is impenitent, he must be miserable; that if he goes on impenitent for ever, he must go on making himself miserable, aye, it may be more and more miserable for ever. Only do not tell us that he must go on. That his impenitence, and therefore his punishment, is irremediable, necessary, endless; and thereby destroy the whole purpose, and we should say, the whole morality, of his punishment. If that punishment be corrective, our moral sense is not shocked by any severity, by any duration: but if it is irremediable, it can not be corrective; and then, what it is, or why it is, we can not—or rather dare not—say. We, too, believe in an eternal fire. But because we believe also the Athanasian Creed, which tells us that there is but one eternal, we believe that that fire must be the fire of God, and therefore, like all that is in God and of God, good and not evil, a blessing and not a curse. We believe that that fire is for ever burning, tho

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men are for ever trying to quench it all day long; and that it has been and will be in every age burning up all the chaff and stubble of man's inventions; the folly, the falsehood, the ignorance, the vice of this sinful world; and we praise God for it; and give thanks to Him for His great glory, that He is the everlasting and triumphant foe of evil and misery, of whom it is written, that our God is a consuming fire."

Such words are being spoken, right or wrong. Such words will bear their fruit, for good or evil. I do not pronounce how much of them is true or false. It is not my place to dogmatize and define, where the Church of England, as by law established, has declined to do so. Neither is it for you to settle these questions. It is rather a matter for your children. A generation more, it may be, of earnest thought will be required, ere the true answer has been found. But it is your duty, if you be educated and thoughtful persons, to face these questions; to consider whether you are believing the exact words of the Bible, and the conclusions of your own reason and moral sense; or whether you are merely believing that cosmogony elaborated in the cloister, that theory of moral retribution pardonable in the middle age, which Dante and Milton sang.

But this I do not hesitate to say, That if we of the clergy can find no other answers to

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these doubts than those which were reasonable and popular in an age when men racked women, burned heretics, and believed that every Mussulman killed in a crusade went straight to Tartarus, then very serious times are at hand, both for the Christian clergy and for Christianity itself.

What, then, are we to believe and do? Shall we degenerate into a lazy skepticism, which believes that everything is a little true, and everything a little false—in plain words, believes nothing at all? Or shall we degenerate into faithless fears, and unmanly wailings that the flood of infidelity is irresistible, and that Christ has left His Church?

We shall do neither, if we believe the text. That tells us of a firm standing ground amid the wreck of fashions and opinions; of a kingdom which can not be moved, tho the heavens pass away like a scroll, and the earth be burnt up with a fervent heat.

And it tells us that the King of that kingdom is He, who is called Jesus Christ—the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever.

An eternal and changeless kingdom, and an eternal and changeless King—these the Epistle to the Hebrews preaches to all generations.

It does not say that we have an unchangeable cosmogony, an unchangeable eschatology, an unchangeable theory of moral retribution, an unchangeable dogmatic system; not to

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these does it point the Jews, while their own nation and worship were in their very death-agony, and the world was rocking and reeling round them, decay and birth going on side by side, in a chaos such as man had never seen before. Not to these does the epistle point the Hebrews: but to the changeless kingdom and to the changeless King.

My friends, do you really believe in that kingdom, and in that King? Do you believe that you are now actually in a kingdom of heaven, which can not be moved; and that the living, acting, guiding, practical, real King thereof is Christ who died on the cross?

These are days in which a preacher is bound to ask his congregation—and still more to ask himself—whether he really believes in that kingdom, and in that King; and to bid himself and them, if they have not believed earnestly enough therein, to repent of having neglected that most cardinal doctrine of Scripture and of the Christian faith.

But if we really believe in that changeless kingdom and in that changeless King, shall we not—considering who Christ is, the coequal and coeternal Son of God—believe also, that if the heavens and the earth are being shaken, then Christ Himself may be shaking them? That if opinions be changing, then Christ Himself may be changing them? That if new truths are being discovered, Christ Himself may be revealing them? That if some of those

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truths seem to contradict those which He has revealed already, they do not really contradict them? That, as in the sixteenth century, Christ is burning up the wood and stubble with which men have built on His foundation, that the pure gold of His truth may alone be left? It is at least possible; it is probable, if we believe that Christ is a living, acting King, to whom all power is given in heaven and earth, and who is actually exercising that power; and educating Christendom, and through Christendom the whole human race, to a knowledge of Himself, and through Himself of God their Father in heaven.

Should we not say—We know that Christ has been so doing, for centuries and for ages? Through Abraham, through Moses, through the prophets, through the Greeks, through the Romans, and at last through Himself, He gave men juster and wider views of themselves, of the universe, and of God. And even then He did not stop. How could He, who said of Himself, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work"? How could He, if He be the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever? Through the apostles, and especially through St. Paul, He enlarged, while He confirmed, His own teaching. And did He not do the same in the sixteenth century? Did He not then sweep from the minds and hearts of half Christendom beliefs which had been sacred and indubitable for a thousand years? Why should

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He not be doing so now? It it be answered, that the Reformation of the sixteenth century was only a return to simpler and purer apostolic truth—why, again, should it not be so now? Why should He not be perfecting His work one step more, and sweeping away more of man's inventions, which are not integral and necessary elements of the one catholic faith, but have been left behind, in pardonable human weakness, by our great reformers? Great they were, and good: giants on the earth, while we are but as dwarfs beside them. But, as the hackneyed proverb says, the dwarf on the giant's shoulders may see further than the giant himself: and so may we.

Oh! that men would approach new truth in something of that spirit; in the spirit of reverence and godly fear, which springs from a living belief in Christ the living King, which is—as the text tells us—the spirit in which we can serve God acceptably. Oh! that they would serve God; waiting reverently and anxiously, as servants standing in the presence of their Lord, for the slightest sign or hint of His will. Then they would have grace by which they would receive new-thought with grace; gracefully, courteously, fairly, charitably, reverently; believing that, however strange or startling, it may come from Him whose ways are not as our ways, nor His thoughts as our thoughts; and that he who fights against it, may haply be fighting against God.

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True, they would receive all new thought with caution, that conservative spirit, which is the duty of every Christian; which is the peculiar strength of the Englishman, because it enables him calmly and slowly to take in the new, without losing the old which his forefathers have already won for him. So they would be cautious, even anxious, lest in grasping too greedily at seeming improvements, they let go some precious knowledge which they had already attained: but they would be on the lookout for improvements; because they would consider themselves, and their generation, as under a divine education. They would prove all things fairly and boldly, and hold fast that which is good; all that which is beautiful, noble, improving and elevating to human souls, minds, or bodies; all that increases the amount of justice, mercy, knowledge, refinement; all that lessens the amount of vice, cruelty, ignorance, barbarism. That at least must come from Christ. That at least must be the inspiration of the Spirit of God: unless the Pharisees were right after all when they said, that evil spirits could be cast out by the prince of the devils.

Be these things as they may, one comfort it will give us, to believe firmly and actively in the changeless kingdom, and in the changeless King. It will give us calm, patience, faith and hope, tho the heavens and the earth be shaken around us. For then we shall see that

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the kingdom, of which we are citizens, is a kingdom of light, and not of darkness; of truth, and not of falsehood; of freedom, and not of slavery; of bounty and mercy, and not of wrath and fear; that we live and move and have our being not in a *"Deus quidam deceptor"* who grudges his children wisdom, but in a Father of Light, from whom comes every good and perfect gift; who willeth that all men should be saved, and come to the knowledge of the truth. In His kingdom we are; and in the King whom He has set over it we can have the most perfect trust. For us that King stooped from heaven to earth; for us He was born, for us He toiled, for us He suffered, for us He died, for us He rose, for us He sits for ever at God's right hand. And can we not trust Him? Let Him do what He will. Let Him lead us whither He will. Wheresoever He leads must be the way of truth and life. Whatsoever He does, must be in harmony with that infinite love which He displayed for us upon the cross. Whatsoever He does, must be in harmony with that eternal purpose by which He reveals to men God their Father. Therefore, tho the heaven and the earth be shaken around us, we will trust in Him. For we know that He is the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever; and that His will and promise is, to lead those who trust in Him into all truth.

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CAIRD

RELIGION IN COMMON LIFE

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CAIRD

RELIGION IN COMMON LIFE

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

JOHN CAIRD was born at Greenock, Scotland, in 1820. The sermon given here was preached before the Queen in 1855, and, printed by her command, attained an amazing circulation. Dr. Caird's deep and earnest thought was clothed almost invariably in clear and beautiful language. He had many gifts as a pulpit speaker. His voice was full and deep-toned, his manner gracious and sympathetic, and his gesture, tho infrequent, was always significant and graceful. He died in 1898.

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CAIRD

1820—1898

RELIGION IN COMMON LIFE[1]

Not slothful in business; fervent in spirit; serving the Lord.—Romans xii., 11.

WHEN a man is learning to be a Christian, it matters not what his particular work in life may be; the work he does is but the copy-line set to him; the main thing to be considered is that he learn to live well. The form is nothing, the execution is everything. It is true, indeed, that prayer, holy reading, meditation, the solemnities and services of the Church, are necessary to religion, and that these can be practised only apart from the work of secular life. But it is to be remembered that all such holy exercises do not terminate in themselves. They are but steps in the ladder to heaven, good only as they help us to climb. They are the irrigation and enriching of the spiritual soil—worse than useless if the crop become not more abundant. They are, in short, but means to an end—good, only in so far as they

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help us to be good and to do good—to glorify God and do good to man; and that end can perhaps best be attained by him whose life is a busy one, whose avocations bear him daily into contact with his fellows, into the intercourse of society, into the heart of the world. No man can be a thorough proficient in navigation who has never been at sea, tho he may learn the theory of it at home. No man can become a soldier by studying books on military tactics in his closet: he must in actual service acquire those habits of coolness, courage, discipline, address, rapid combination, without which the most learned in the theory of strategy or engineering will be but a schoolboy soldier after all. And, in the same way, a man in solitude and study may become a most learned theologian, or may train himself into the timid, effeminate piety of what is technically called "the righteous life." But never, in the highest and holiest sense, can he become a religious man, until he has acquired those habits of daily self-denial, of resistance to temptation, of kindness, gentleness, humility, sympathy, active beneficence, which are to be acquired only in daily contact with mankind. Tell us not, then, that the man of business, the bustling tradesman, the toil-worn laborer, has little or no time to attend to religion. As well tell us that the pilot, amid the winds and storms, has no leisure to attend to navigation—or the general, on the field of

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battle, to the art of war! Where will he attend to it? Religion is not a perpetual moping over good books—religion is not even prayer, praise, holy ordinances; these are necessary to religion—no man can be religious without them. But religion, I repeat, is, mainly and chiefly, the glorifying God amid the duties and trials of the world,—the guiding our course amid the adverse winds and currents of temptation, by the starlight of duty and the compass of divine truth,—the bearing us manfully, wisely, courageously, for the honor of Christ, our great Leader, in the conflict of life. Away then with the notion that ministers and devotees may be religious, but that a religious and holy life is impracticable in the rough and busy world! Nay rather, believe me, that is the proper scene, the peculiar and appropriate field for religion,—the place in which to prove that piety is not a dream of Sundays and solitary hours; that it can bear the light of day; that it can wear well amid the rough jostlings, the hard struggles, the coarse contacts of common life,—the place, in one word, to prove how possible it is for a man to be at once "not slothful in business," and "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."

Another consideration, which I shall adduce in support of the assertion that it is not impossible to blend religion with the business of common life, is this: that religion consists, not so much in doing spiritual or sacred acts, as

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in doing secular acts from a sacred or religious motive.

There is a very common tendency in our minds to classify actions according to their outward form, rather than according to the spirit or motive which pervades them. Literature is sometimes arbitrarily divided into "sacred" and "profane" literature, history into "sacred" and "profane" history,—in which classification the term "profane" is applied, not to what is bad or unholy, but to everything that is not technically sacred or religious—to all literature that does not treat of religious doctrines and duties, and to all history save church history. And we are very apt to apply the same principle to actions. Thus in many pious minds there is a tendency to regard all the actions of common life as so much, by an unfortunate necessity, lost to religion. Prayer, the reading of the Bible and devotional books, public worship—and buying, selling, digging, sowing, bartering, money-making, are separated into two distinct, and almost hostile, categories. The religious heart and sympathies are thrown entirely into the former, and the latter are barely tolerated as a bondage incident to our fallen state, but almost of necessity tending to turn aside the heart from God.

But what God has cleansed, why should we call common or unclean? The tendency in

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question, tho founded on right feeling, is surely a mistaken one. For it is to be remembered that moral qualities reside not in actions, but in the agent who performs them, and that it is the spirit or motive from which we do any work that constitutes it base or noble, worldly or spiritual, secular or sacred. The actions of an automaton may be outwardly the same as those of a moral agent, but who attributes to them goodness or badness? A musical instrument may discourse sacred melodies better than the holiest lips can sing them, but who thinks of commending it for its piety? It is the same with actions as with places. Just as no spot or scene on earth is in itself more or less holy than another, but the presence of a holy heart may hallow—of a base one desecrate—any place where it dwells; so with actions. Many actions, materially great and noble, may yet, because of the spirit that prompts and pervades them, be really ignoble and mean; and, on the other hand, many actions externally mean and lowly, may, because of the state of his heart who does them, be truly exalted and honorable. It is possible to fill the highest station on earth, and go through the actions pertaining to it in a spirit that degrades all its dignities, and renders all its high and courtly doings essentially sordid and vulgar. And it is no mere sentimentality to say that there may dwell in a lowly mechanic's or household

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servant's breast a spirit that dignifies the coarsest toils and "renders drudgery divine." Herod of old was a slave, tho he sat upon a throne; but who will say that the work of that carpenter's shop at Nazareth was not noble and kingly work indeed!

A life spent amidst holy things may be intensely secular; a life, the most of which is passed in the thick and throng of the world, may be holy and divine. A minister, for instance, preaching, praying, ever speaking holy words and performing sacred acts, may be all the while doing actions no more holy than those of the printer who prints Bibles, or of the bookseller who sells them; for, in both cases alike, the whole affair may be nothing more than a trade. Nay, the comparison tells worse for the former, for the secular trade is innocent and commendable, but the trade which traffics and tampers with holy things is, beneath all its mock solemnity, "earthly, sensual, devilish."

So, to adduce one other example, the public worship of God is holy work: no man can be living a holy life who neglects it. But the public worship of God may be—and with multitudes who frequent our churches is—degraded into work most worldly, most distasteful to the great Object of our homage. He "to whom all hearts be open, all desires known," discerns how many of you have come hither to-day from the earnest desire to hold

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communion with the Father of Spirits, to open your hearts to Him, to unburden yourselves in His loving presence of the cares and crosses that have been pressing hard upon you through the past week, and by common prayer and praise, and the hearing of His holy Word, to gain fresh incentive and energy for the prosecution of His work in the world; and how many, on the other hand, from no better motive, perhaps, than curiosity or old habit, or regard to decency and respectability, or the mere desire to get rid of yourselves, and pass a vacant hour that would hang heavy on your hands. And who can doubt that, where such motives as these prevail, to the piercing, unerring inspection of Him whom outwardly we seem to reverence, not the market-place, the exchange, the counting-room appears a place more intensely secular—not the most reckless and riotous festivity, a scene of more unhallowed levity, than is presented by the house of prayer?

But, on the other hand, carry holy principles with you into the world, and the world will become hallowed by their presence. A Christ-like spirit will Christianize everything it touches. A meek heart, in which the altar-fire of love to God is burning, will lay hold of the commonest, rudest things in life, and transmute them, like coarse fuel at the touch of fire, into a pure and holy flame. Religion in the soul will make all the work and toil of

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life—its gains and losses, friendships, rivalries, competitions—its manifold incidents and events—the means of religious advancement. Marble or coarse clay, it matters not much with which of these the artist works, the touch of genius transforms the coarser material into beauty, and lends to the finer a value it never had before. Lofty or lowly, rude or refined, as our earthly work may be, it will become to a holy mind only the material for something infinitely nobler than all the creations of genius —a pure and godlike life. To spiritualize what is material, to Christianize what is secular—this is the noble achievment of Christian principle. If you are a sincere Christian, it will be your great desire, by God's grace, to bring every gift, talent, occupation of life, every word you speak, every action you do, under the control of Christian motive. Your conversation may not always—nay, may seldom, save with intimate friends—consist of formally religious words; you may perhaps shrink from the introduction of religious topics in general society; but it demands a less amount of Christian effort occasionally to speak religious words, than to infuse the spirit of religion into all our words; and if the whole tenor of your common talk be pervaded by a spirit of piety, gentleness, earnestness, sincerity, it will be Christian conversation not the less. If God has endowed you with intellectual gifts, it may be well if you

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directly devote them to His service in the religious instruction; but a man may be a Christian thinker and writer as much when giving to science, or history, or biography, or poetry, a Christian tone and spirit, as when composing sermons or writing hymns. To promote the cause of Christ directly, by furthering every religious and missionary enterprise at home and abroad, is undoubtedly your duty; but remember that your duty terminates not when you have done all this, for you may promote Christ's cause even still more effectually when in your daily demeanor —in the family, in society, in your business transactions, in all your common intercourse with the world—you are diffusing the influence of Christian principle around you by the silent eloquence of a holy life. Rise superior, in Christ's strength, to all equivocal practises and advantages in trade; shrink from every approach to meanness or dishonesty; let your eye, fixed on a reward before which earthly wealth grows dim, beam with honor; let the thought of God make you self-restrained, temperate, watchful over speech and conduct; let the abiding sense of Christ's redeeming love to you make you gentle, self-denying, kind, and loving to all around you;—then indeed will your secular life become spiritualized, whilst, at the same time, your spiritual life will grow more fervent; then not only will your prayers become more devout, but when

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the knee bends not, and the lip is silent, the life in its heavenward tone will "pray without ceasing;" then from amidst the roar and din of earthly toil the ear of God will hear the sweetest anthems rising; then, finally, will your daily experience prove that it is no high and unattainable elevation of virtue, but a simple and natural thing, to which the text points, when it bids us to be both "diligent in business" and "fervent in spirit, serving the Lord."

As a last illustration of the possibility of blending religion with the business of common life, let me call your attention to what may be described as the mind's power of acting on latent principles.

In order to live a religious life in the world, every action must be governed by religious motives. But in making this assertion, it is not by any means implied that in all the familiar actions of our daily life religion must form a direct and conscious object of thought. To be always thinking of God, and Christ, and eternity amidst our worldly work, and, however busy, eager, interested we may be in the special business before us, to have religious ideas, doctrines, beliefs, present to the mind, —this is simply impossible. The mind can no more consciously think of heaven and earth at the same moment than the body can be in heaven and earth at the same moment. Moreover there are few kinds of work in the world

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that, to be done well, must not be done heartily, many that require, in order to excellence, the whole condensed force and energy of the highest mind.

But tho it be true that we can not, in our worldly work, be always consciously thinking of religion, yet it is also true that unconsciously, we may be acting under its ever-present control. As there are laws and powers in the natural world of which, without thinking of them, we are ever availing ourselves,—as I do not think of gravitation when I move my limbs, or of atmospheric laws when, by means of them, I breathe, so in the routine of daily work, tho comparatively seldom do I think of them, I may yet be constantly swayed by the motives, sustained by the principles, living, breathing, acting in the invisible atmosphere of true religion. There are under-currents in the ocean which act independently of the movements of the waters on the surface; far down too in its hidden depths there is a region where, even tho the storm be raging on the upper waves, perpetual calmness and stillness reign. So there may be an under-current beneath the surface-movements of your life—there may dwell in the secret depths of your being the abiding peace of God, the repose of a holy mind, even tho, all the while, the restless stir and commotion of worldly business may mark your outer history.

And, in order to see this, it is to be remem-

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bered, that many of the thoughts and motives that most powerfully impel and govern us in the common actions of life, are latent thoughts and motives. Have you not often experienced that curious law—a law, perhaps, contrived by God with an express view to this its highest application—by which a secret thought or feeling may lie brooding in your mind, quite apart from the particular work in which you happen to be employed? Have you never, for instance, while reading aloud, carried along with you in your reading the secret impression of the presence of the listener—an impression that kept pace with all the mind's activity in the special work of reading; nay, have you not sometimes felt the mind, while prosecuting without interruption the work of reading, yet at the same time carrying on some other train of reflection apart altogether from that suggested by the book? Here is obviously a particular "business" in which you were "diligent," yet another and different thought to which the "spirit" turned. Or, think of the work in which I am this moment occupied. Amidst all the mental exertions of the public speaker—underneath the outward workings of his mind, so to speak, there is the latent thought of the presence of auditory. Perhaps no species of exertion requires greater concentration of thought or undividedness of attention than this: and yet, amidst all the subtle processes of intellect,—

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the excogitation or recollection of ideas,—the selection, right ordering and enunciation of words, there never quits his mind for one moment the idea of the presence of the listening throng. Like a secret atmosphere, it surrounds and bathes his spirit as he goes on with the external work. And have not you too, my friends, an Auditor—it may be a "great cloud of witnesses,"—but at least one all-glorious Witness and Listener ever present, ever watchful, as the discourse of life proceeds? Why then, in this case too, while the outward business is diligently prosecuted, may there not be on your spirit a latent and constant impression of that awful inspection? What worldly work so absorbing as to leave no room in a believer's spirit for the hallowing thought of that glorious Presence ever near? Do not say that you do not see God—that the presence of the divine Auditor is not forced upon your senses as that of the human auditory on the speaker. For the same process goes on in the secret meditations as in the public addresses of the preacher—the same latent reference to those who shall listen to his words dwells in his mind when in his solitary retirement he thinks and writes, as when he speaks in their immediate presence. And surely if the thought of an earthly auditory—of human minds and hearts that shall respond to his thoughts and words can intertwine itself with all the activities of a man's mind, and flash

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back inspiration on his soul, at least as potent and as penetrating may the thought be, or Him, the great Lord of heaven and earth, who not only sees and knows us now, but before whose awful presence, in the last great congregation, we shall stand forth to recount and answer for our every thought and deed.

Or, to take but one other example, have we not all felt that the thought of anticipated happiness may blend itself with the work of our business hours? The laborer's evening release from toil, the schoolboy's coming holiday, or the hard-wrought business-man's approaching season of relaxation—the expected return of a long-absent and much-loved friend—is not the thought of these, or similar joyous events, one which often intermingles with, without interrupting, our common work? When a father goes forth to his "labor till the evening," perhaps often, very often, in the thick of his toils, the thought of home may start up to cheer him. The smile that is to welcome him, as he crosses his lowly threshold when the work of the day is over, the glad faces, and merry voices, and sweet caresses of little ones, as they shall gather round him in the quiet evening hours—the thought of all this may dwell, a latent joy, a hidden motive, deep down in his heart of hearts, may come rushing in a sweet solace at every pause of exertion, and act like a secret oil to smooth the

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wheels of labor. And so, in the other cases I have named, even when our outward activities are the most strenuous, even when every energy of mind and body is full strung for work, the anticipation of coming happiness may never be absent from our minds. The heart has a secret treasury, where our hopes and joys are often garnered—too precious to be parted with even for a moment.

And why may not the highest of all hopes and joys possess the same all-pervading influence? Have we, if our religion be real, no anticipation of happiness in the glorious future? Is there no "rest that remaineth for the people of God," no home and loving heart awaiting us when the toils of our hurried day of life are ended? What is earthly rest or relaxation, what that release from toil after which we so often sigh, but the faint shadow of the saint's everlasting rest—the repose of eternal purity—the calm of a spirit in which, not the tension of labor only, but the strain of the moral strife with sin, has ceased—the rest of the soul in God! What visions of earthly bliss can ever—if our Christian faith be not a form—compare with "the glory soon to be revealed"—what joy of earthly reunion with the rapture of the hour when the heavens shall yield our absent Lord to our embrace, to be parted from us no more for ever! And if all this be not a dream and a fancy, but most sober truth, what is there to except this

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joyful hope from that law to which, in all other deep joys, our minds are subject? Why may we not, in this case too, think often, amidst our worldly work, of the Home to which we are going, of the true and loving heart that beats for us, and of the sweet and joyous welcome that awaits us there? And even when we make them not, of set purpose, the subject of our thoughts, is there not enough of grandeur in the objects of a believer's hope to pervade his spirit at all times with a calm and reverential joy? Do not think all this strange, fanatical, impossible. If it do seem so, it can only be because your heart is in the earthly hopes, but not in the higher and holier hopes—because love to Christ is still to you but a name—because you can give more ardor of thought to the anticipation of a coming holiday than to the hope of heaven and glory everlasting. No, my friends! the strange thing is, not that amidst the world's work we should be able to think of our Home, but that we should ever be able to forget it; and the stranger, sadder still, that while the little day of life is passing,—morning—noontide—evening,—each stage more rapid than the last, while to many the shadows are already fast lengthening, and the declining sun warns them that "the night is at hand, wherein no man can work," there should be those amongst us whose whole thoughts are absorbed in the business of the world, and to whom the reflec-

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tion never occurs that soon they must go out into eternity—without a friend—without a home!

Such, then, is the true idea of the Christian life—a life not of periodic observances, or of occasional fervors, or even of splendid acts of heroism and self-devotion, but of quiet, constant, unobtrusive earnestness, amidst the commonplace work of the world. This is the life to which Christ calls us. Is it yours? Have you entered upon it, or are you now willing to enter upon it? It is not, I admit, an imposing or an easy one. There is nothing in it to dazzle, much in its hardness and plainness to deter the irresolute. The life of a follower of Christ demands not, indeed, in our day, the courage of the hero or the martyr, the fortitude that braves outward dangers and sufferings, and flinches not from persecution and death. But with the age of persecution the difficulties of the Christian life have not passed away. In maintaining, in the unambitious routine of humble duties, a spirit of Christian cheerfulness and contentment—in preserving the fervor of piety amidst unexciting cares and wearing anxieties —in the perpetual reference to lofty ends amidst lowly toils—there may be evinced a faith as strong as that of a man who dies with the song of martyrdom on his lips. It is a great thing to love Christ so dearly as to be "ready to be bound and to die" for Him;

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but it is often a thing not less great to be ready to take up our daily cross, and to live for Him.

But be the difficulties of a Christian life in the world what they may, they need not discourage us. Whatever the work to which our Master calls us, He offers us a strength commensurate with our needs. No man who wishes to serve Christ will ever fail for lack of heavenly aid. And it will be no valid excuse for an ungodly life that it is difficult to keep alive the flame of piety in the world, if Christ be ready to supply the fuel.

To all, then, who really wish to lead such a life, let me suggest that the first thing to be done—that without which all other efforts are worse than vain—is heartily to devote themselves to God through Christ Jesus. Much as has been said of the infusion of religious principle and motive into our worldly work, there is a preliminary advice of greater importance still—that we be religious. Life comes before growth. The soldier must enlist before he can serve. In vain are directions how to keep the fire ever burning on the altar, if first it be not kindled. No religion can be genuine, no goodness can be constant or lasting, that springs not, as its primary source, from faith in Jesus Christ. To know Christ as my Savior—to come with all my guilt and weakness to Him in whom trembling penitence never fails to find a friend—to cast myself

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at His feet in whom all that is sublime in divine holiness is softened, though not obscured, by all that is beautiful in human tenderness — and, believing in that love stronger than death which, for me, and such as me, drained the cup of untold sorrows, and bore without murmur the bitter curse of sin, to trust my soul for time and eternity into His hands—this is the beginning of true religion. And it is the reverential love with which the believer must ever look to Him to whom he owes so much, that constitutes the mainspring of the religion of daily life. Selfishness may prompt to a formal religion, natural susceptibility may give rise to a fitful one, but for a life of constant fervent piety, amidst the world's cares and toils, no motive is sufficient save one—self-devoted love to Christ.

But again, if you would lead a Christian life in the world, let me remind you that that life must be continued as well as begun with Christ. You must learn to look to Him not merely as your Savior from guilt, but as the Friend of your secret life, the chosen Companion of your solitary hours, the Depositary of all the deeper thoughts and feelings of your soul. You can not live for Him in the world unless you live much with Him, apart from the world. In spiritual as in secular things, the deepest and strongest characters need much solitude to form them. Even earthly great-

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ness, much more moral and spiritual greatness, is never attained but as the result of much that is concealed from the world—of many a lonely and meditative hour. Thoughtfulness, self-knowledge, self-control, a chastened wisdom and piety, are the fruit of habitual meditation and prayer. In these exercises heaven is brought near, and our exaggerated estimate of earthly things corrected. By these our spiritual energies, shattered and worn by the friction of worldly work, are repaired. In the recurring seasons of devotion the cares and anxieties of worldly business cease to vex us; exhausted with its toils, we have, in daily communion with God, "meat to eat which the world knoweth not of;" and even when its calamities and losses fall upon us, and our portion of worldly good may be withdrawn, we may be able to show, like those holy ones of old at the heathen court, by the fair serene countenance of the spirit, that we have something better than the world's pulse to feed upon.

But, further, in availing yourself of this divine resource amidst the daily exigencies of life, why should you wait always for the periodic season and the formal attitude of prayer? The heavens are not open to the believer's call only at intervals. The grace of God's Holy Spirit falls not like the fertilizing shower, only now and then; or like the dew on the earth's face, only at morning and night.

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At all times on the uplifted face of the believer's spirit the gracious element is ready to descend. Pray always; pray without ceasing. When difficulties arise, delay not to seek and obtain at once the succor you need. Swifter than by the subtle electric agent is thought borne from earth to heaven. The Great Spirit on high is in constant sympathy with the believing spirit beneath, and in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, the thrill of aspiration flashes from the heart of man to God. Whenever anything vexes you—whenever, from the rude and selfish ways of men, any trials of temper cross your path—when your spirits are ruffled, or your Christian forbearance put to the test, be this your instant resource! Haste away, if only for a moment, to the serene and peace-breathing presence of Jesus, and you will not fail to return with a spirit soothed and calmed. Or when the impure and low-minded surround you—when, in the path of duty, the high tone of your Christian purity is apt to suffer from baser contacts, oh, what a relief to lift the heart to Christ!—to rise on the wings of faith—even for one instant to breathe the air of that region where the Infinite Purity dwells, and then return with a mind steeled against temptation, ready to recoil, with the instinctive abhorrence of a spirit that has been beside the throne, from all that is impure and vile. Say not, then, with such aid at your command,

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that religion can not be brought down to common life!

In conclusion, let me once more urge upon you the great lesson on which we have been insisting. Carry religious principle into everyday life. Principle elevates whatever it touches. Facts lose all their littleness to the mind which brings principle and law to bear upon them. The chemist's or geologist's soiled hands are no sign of base work; the coarsest operations of the laboratory, the breaking of stones with a hammer, cease to be mechanical when intellectual thought and principle govern the mind and guide the hands. And religious principle is the noblest of all. Bring it to bear on common actions and coarse cares, and infinitely nobler even than the philosophic or scientific, becomes the Christian life. Live for Christ in common things, and all your work will become priestly work. As in the temple of old, it was holy work to hew wood or mix oil, because it was done for the altar-sacrifice or the sacred lamps; so all your coarse and common work will receive a consecration when done for God's glory, by one who is a true priest to His temple.

Carry religion into common life, and your life will be rendered useful as well as noble. There are many men who listen incredulously to the high-toned exhortations of the pulpit; the religious life there depicted is much too seraphic, they think, for this plain and prosaic

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world of ours. Show these men that the picture is not a fancy one. Make it a reality. Bring religion down from the clouds. Apply to it the infallible test of experiment; and, by suffusing your daily actions with holy principles, prove that love to God, superiority to worldly pleasure, spirituality, holiness, heavenly-mindedness, are something more than the stock ideas of sermons.

Carry religious principle into common life, and common life will lose its transitoriness. "The world passeth away!" "The things that are seen are temporal." Soon business with all its cares and anxieties—the whole "unprofitable stir and fever of the world" —will be to us a thing of the past. But religion does something better than sigh and muse over the perishableness of earthly things; it finds in them the seed of immortality. No work done for Christ perishes. No action that helps to mold the deathless mind of a saint of God is ever lost. Live for Christ in the world, and you carry with you into eternity all of the results of the world's business that are worth the keeping. The river of life sweeps on, but the gold grains it held in solution are left behind deposited in the holy heart. "The world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever." Every other result of our "diligence in business" will soon be gone. You cannot invent any mode of exchange

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between the visible and invisible worlds, so that the balance at your credit in the one can be transferred, when you migrate from it, to your account in the other. Worldly sharpness, acuteness, versatility, are not the qualities in request in the world to come. The capacious intellect, stored with knowledge, and disciplined into admirable perspicacity, tact, worldly wisdom, by a lifetime devoted to politics or business, is not, by such attainments, fitted to take a higher place among the sons of immortality. The honor, fame, respect, obsequious homage that attend worldly greatness up to the grave's brink, will not follow it one step beyond. These advantages are not to be despised; but if these be all that, by the toil of our hand, or the sweat of our brow, we have gained, the hour is fast coming when we shall discover that we have labored in vain and spent our strength for naught. But while these pass, there are other things that remain. The world's gains and losses may soon cease to affect us, but not the gratitude or the patience, the kindness or the resignation, they drew forth from our hearts. The world's scenes of business may fade on our sight, the noise of its restless pursuits may fall no more upon our ear, when we pass to meet our God; but not one unselfish thought, not one kind and gentle word, not one act of self-sacrificing love done for Jesus' sake, in the midst of our common work, but will have

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left an indelible impress on the soul which will go out with it to its eternal destiny. So live, then, that this may be the result of your labors. So live that your work, whether in the Church or in the world, may become a discipline for that glorious state of being in which the Church and the world shall become one, —where work shall be worship, and labor shall be rest,—where the worker shall never quit the temple, nor the worshiper the place of work, because "there is no temple therein, but the Lord God Almighty and the Lamb are the temple thereof."

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STORRS

THE PERMANENT MOTIVE IN MISSIONARY WORK

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

RICHARD S. STORRS was born at Braintree, Mass., in 1821. In his book "Preaching Without Notes," he tells of his early practise and experience in pulpit delivery. After fifteen years patient effort he became one of the most accomplished extemporaneous speakers in America. He wrote much at first, developing a fine rhetorical style and a rich vocabulary that subsequently served him well as an impromptu speaker. His advice to divinity students was: "Always be careful to keep up the habit of writing, with whatever of skill, elegance, and force, you can command." Because of this early training in writing he was able later in life to adopt the method of thoroughly preparing his thought for his sermons, and of leaving the choice of words and the framing of sentences to the moment of delivery. His greatest success was achieved after he became a purely extemporaneous preacher. He was for fifty-four years pastor of the Church of the Pilgrims, Brooklyn. During this time he produced a number of books, of which the most important is "The Divine Origin of Christianity, Indicated by its Historical Effects." He died in 1900.

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STORRS

1821—1900

THE PERMANENT MOTIVE IN MISSIONARY WORK

Go ye into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature.—Mark xvi., 15.

THE Permanent Motive in Missionary Work: it is a catholic and comprehensive, even a cosmopolitan theme. It does not concern itself simply with the interest of foreign missions, technically so called. But, if you think of it, it concerns those in every Christian communion who are trying to further the cause and kingdom of our Lord on the earth. It concerns not the missionary fields alone, as they are popularly called, in other lands, but every field in which Christian service is sought to be rendered, from the obscurest slum in this town of Boston to the ragged edges of the circumference, the outmost circumference, of the world of mankind.

We are familiar, of course, with the temporary, local, changing motives to missionary enterprise, which meet us at times, impress us forcibly for the moment, and pass away; the influence of great and signal occasions, when sympathies are almost tumultuously excited;

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the impulse which comes with a sweeping eloquence, which lifts us from the common levels of earth, and bears us as on wings toward issues and actions which we had not anticipated; perhaps the impulse which comes with personal interest in missionaries whom we have known, or mission fields which we have traversed. Great successes on certain fields move our enthusiasm; or tragic and terrible experiences in others, as recently among the Armenians, stir the deep fountains of our feeling. No one of these impulses is to be disregarded. Each one in its place has a power of its own, and all are to be valued and welcomed for their effect. But what we are to look for is the motive more deep, permanent, governing, which will be beneath and behind all these; as the tide-motive is beneath and behind the advancing and retreating waves which rise and flash, and break upon the beach; and this will be a motive not simple and single, but no doubt combined of several, distinguishable from each other, as a powerful current is made up of different uniting affluents. We must separate them in thought, that we may afterward combine them.

I think first, then, we shall all recognize this as essential to the missionary motive: a clear and profound recognition of the evilness and misery of the actual condition of mankind, certainly as compared with the powers which are instinctive in every human soul. It

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makes no difference really, or very little, at this point, whether we accept the Scriptural declaration that man has fallen from a higher estate to his present level, or conceive, with some modern theorizers, that man is just now partially emerging from the conditions of his brute ancestry, stumbling up, through sin and error and manifold tremendous mistakes, toward wisdom and virtue, and the blessedness which they bring. In either case, the present condition of mankind is one of imperfection, weakness, unsatisfied desire, unrealized promise, and manifold peril. It is not the missionary who tells us this, principally or alone. Every observant foreign traveler repeats the same. Everyone who has resided abroad, and then he comes back to testify with an unprejudiced mind to that which he has observed, relates the same. The supreme difficulty here is in the want of the recognition of God, and of the great immortality.

It used to be a reproach against Christian scholars, made by skeptics, that they investigated the ethnic religions in the spirit of suspicious hostility, by which their processes were diverted from true lines, by which their conclusions were colored. I am not concerned to argue the case of the Christian scholars of fifty years ago, or more, but I can certainly affirm that the Christian scholars of our own time investigate these religions carefully, patiently, sympathetically, with an eager de-

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sire to find everything in them that is of beautiful worth; and they do find many things of truth and beauty, many things which excite their admiration, as illustrating the attainment of the higher aspiration of the human mind, reaching after the unseen if haply it might find it. But they find nowhere the discovery of one personal God, eternal in authority, immaculate in character, creating man in His own image, and opening before him the ageless immensities beyond the grave; and in the absence of such recognition of God, and such recognition of the immortality, man is left to grope where he can not fly, to clutch the earth where he misses heaven. So it is that industrially, politically, commercially, socially, intellectually, he is on the lower level, until some exterior power reaches and ennobles him. So it is that crime, such as is unknown in Christian communities, is familiar and tolerated in the world. In fact, we need not fix our thought, prominently, on the more devilish crimes which still exist in parts and portions of the earth,—cannibalism, infanticide, human sacrifices, self-torture, the slavery that would destroy body and soul together in its own hell. Commoner vices have told us the story sufficiently,—drunkenness, licentiousness, the gambling passion, the opium habit, the fierce self-will that rushes to its end, regardless of anything sacred, in order to attain its pleasure.

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All these we know. How familiar they are to the mind, and in the life, of the world at large! And there seems no power arising within the circle not reached by Christian influence to relieve the gloom, to elevate those who are oppressed by these sore burdens. There *is* no power. Property asserts its right to oppress, and to enjoy; poverty accepts its function, however unwillingly, of suffering in silence; the degradation of woman strikes a vicious stab at the heart and conscience of immense communities, while the oppression of childhood blights life at its germ; and, with the prospect of nothing better to come, suicide becomes a common refuge from the unbearable misery. There is nothing overstated in this description of the world at large; and you know how it is in your city slums, even in this city of refinement and culture, I have no doubt; certainly in the city in which I live; in the London and Birmingham of the other side, where the little girl twelve years old had never heard the name of Christ, where the boy of about the same age only knew the nature of an oath by having been his lordship's caddy. These are what we are to reach and lift, if we can do it. These are they to whom we are to bring blessings from the Most High. Certainly, every heart in which there is a spark of Christian sympathy must feel the power of this motive, pressing to the utmost and instant exertion of every force

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to relieve the suffering, to enlighten the darkened, and to lift the opprest.

No one need exaggerate, everyone should recognize, the weakness and wretchedness, the exposure and the peril of human society. When we remember that in this universe of ours destiny clings closely to character, has never anything mechanical or arbitrary about it, but follows the spirit which encounters it, then those tremendous words of our Lord in the twenty-fifth of Matthew have upon them an appalling sharpness and reach, as addrest to the great classes and companies of mankind; and we must recognize it, and hear the solemn bell of the universe ringing through His word, and telling us of what is to be looked for in the hereafter.

But then with this recognition of the exposure and peril of human society, of mankind at large, we must associate the recognition of the recoverableness to truth, to virtue and God, of persons and of peoples who are now involved in these calamities and pains; to whom, now, unrest and apprehension are as natural as speech or sight; the recoverableness of men as persons, and of communities as well as persons.

Here, of course, we come into direct antagonism with the pessimist, who says, "It is all nonsense! You can't possibly do the work; you can't take these ragged and soiled remnants of humanity in your city streets

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and weave them into purple and golden garments for the Master; you can not accomplish the effect which you contemplate, in the cities, in your own land, along the frontier, or in other lands. It is as impossible to make the unchaste pure, to make the mean noble, as it is to make crystal lenses out of mud, or the delicate elastic watch-spring out of the iron slag!" That is the world's view, a common and a hateful view. Our answer to it is that the thing can be done, and has been done, and done in such multitudes of instances that there is no use whatever in arguing against the fact. Christ came from the heavens to the earth on an errand. He knew what was in man; and He did not come from the celestial seats on an errand known beforehand to be fruitless and futile. He came because He knew the interior, central, divine element in human nature, to which He could appeal and by which He could lift men toward things transcendent. We have seen the examples of success, how many times! Hundreds, yea even thousands of times, in our own communities, as missionaries have seen them in the lands abroad: where the woman intemperate, in harlotry, in despair, has been lifted to restored womanhood, as the pearl oyster is brought up with its precious contents from the slimy ooze; where the man whose lips had been charged with foulest blasphemies has become the preacher of the gospel of light and love,

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of hope and peace, to others, his former comrades; where the feet that were swift to do evil have become beautiful on the mountains in publishing salvation. We have seen these things in individuals and in communities; in the roughest frontier mining-camp, where every door opened on a saloon or a brothel, or a gambling-table, and where, by the power coming from on high, it has been transformed into the peaceful Christian village, with the home, with the school, with the church, with the asylum, with the holy song, where the former customary music had been the crack of revolvers. We have seen the same thing on a larger scale in the coral islands, scenes of savage massacer and of cannibal riot and ferocity, where the Church has been planted, and Christian fellowships have been established and maintained. We have seen these things, and why argue against facts?

Arguing against fact, as men ultimately find out, is like trying to stop with articulate breath the march of the stately battleship as she sweeps onward to her anchorage. An argument may meet a contrary argument; no argument can overwhelm a fact. And these facts in experience are as sure, as difficult of belief perhaps, but as compulsive of belief, as are the scientific demonstrations of the liquid air, of the wireless telegraphy. We do not question the reality of what we see; and we know that these effects

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have been produced, on the smaller scale and on the larger. I suppose that everyone who has ever stood on the heights above Naples, at the Church of San Martino, on the way to St. Elmo, has noticed, as I remember to have noticed, that all the sounds coming up from that gay, populous, brilliant, fascinating city, as they reached the upper air, met and mingled on the minor key. There were the voices of traffic and the voices of command, the voices of affection and the voices of rebuke, the shouts of sailors, and the cries of itinerant venders in the street, with the chatter and the laugh of childhood; but they all came up into this incessant moan in the air. That is the voice of the world in the upper air, where there are spirits to hear it. That is the cry of the world for help. And here is the answer to that cry: a song of triumph and glorious expectation, taking the place of the moan, in the village, in the city, in the great community; men and women out of whom multitudes of devils have been cast, as out of him of old, sitting clothed, and in their right minds, at the feet of Jesus.

You can not tell me that it is impossible to produce these effects, for mine own eyes have seen them, mine own hands have touched them. I know their reality, and that every human soul which has not committed the final sin and passed the judgment is recoverable to God, if the right remedy be definitely ap-

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plied; and that every people, however weak, however sinful, however wanting in hope and expectation, has within it the possibility, and above it the promise, of the millennium. God's power is adequate to all that. We want to associate this idea of the recoverableness of persons and of peoples to the highest ideal and to God Himself; we want to combine this with the idea of man's present misery and hopelessness in his condition, to constitute the true and powerful missionary motive; and then we want to recognize the fact that the gospel of Christ is the one force which, being used, secures this result in the most unpromising conditions.

Here, again, we encounter the opposition of multitudes. How often men have laughed, how loudly they have laughed, at the idea that the story of the crucified Nazarene could inspire a despondent soul to hope, could purify the vicious soul into virtue, could bring any soul nearer to God! Perhaps somewhere they are laughing at it now; possibly even in this city of Boston, the home of culture and refinement, of fine and wide thought—I don't know, I don't live here; but I know that in the country at large there are always those who are disposed to say, "It is perfectly puerile to try to reach human sorrow and human sin with the power of the gospel, lodged in the little book which the child may carry in her hand!" As if the inconspicuous

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forces in the world's development were not always those deadliest on the one hand, or most benign on the other; as if wafts of air did not kill multitudes more than all the batteries of artillery; as if the unseen forces, hardly manifesting themselves at all, were not those which society seizes by which to advance itself most rapidly and grandly—that little spark, vanishing instantaneously, but revealing the unseen force which drives machineries, draws carriages, illuminates cities, and enables you and me to talk as if face to face with friends and correspondents at the distance of a thousand miles; that fleecy vapor, vanishing silently into the air but representing the gigantic servant of modern civilization, which tunnels mountains, scoops out mines, and links the continents together with iron bands. These unseen powers are the ones that man craves and uses, or that, on the other hand, he dreads and repels; and the power of the gospel, however men may smile at the idea of that power, has vindicated itself too many times to be assailed by argument, certainly too many times to be encountered with ridicule.

The gospel is able to reconstitute society by reconstructing the character of individuals. Through its effect on persons it opens the way for vast national advances. It touches not merely the higher themes, but all the themes that are associated with those, and immedi-

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ately pertinent to the interest of mankind. It teaches frugality and industry, and honesty, by express command, and by the divine example of Him who brought it to us. It turns men, as has been forcibly said, "out of the trails of blood and plunder into the path of honest toil." It is a gospel for every creature, that is, for every created thing; and gardens bloom in a lovelier beauty under its influence, and harvest festivals, of which the country is full to-day, are only its natural and beautiful fruit and trophy. It exalts womanhood; and by the honor it puts on womanhood, and by the honor it puts on childhood, it inaugurates the new family life in the world. It honors, as no other religion does or ever did, the essential worth of the immortal spirit in man; and it forces him, pushes him, crowds him, into thoughtfulness and educational discipline, since it will not allow him to be manipulated into paradise by any priestly hand, but comes to him in a Book, and sets him to work to investigate its contents, to inquire concerning it, to look out widely around it, and to inform himself by careful thought of what it is and what it means.

There is the basis of colleges and theological seminaries, and I hope there will be no quarrel between them! There is the basis of all the educational institutions and influences that are worthy in the world. Christianity

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brings them. It generates by degrees a new social conscience. It unites communities, on which it has operated, in new relationships to each other. International alliances become possible, become vital. International law becomes a reality and a power; beneficence is stimulated, and law becomes ethical. As we have seen recently, in the prodigious excitement of feeling throughout civilized countries in consequence of the apparent gross injustice done to a single French officer by a military court, the time is coming, tho it has not yet fully come, when mankind shall be one in spirit, and an

> ". . . instinct bear along,
> Round the earth's electric circle,
> One swift flash of right or wrong."

It is not commerce which does this, it is Christianity. We are witnesses to it. Our ancestors, not many centuries ago, were mere rapacious savages, robbers in the forests, pirates on the sea; it was Christianity, brought to them, that lifted them into gladness, serenity, great purpose, great expectation and hope; and the new civilization in which we rejoice on either side, I will not say of the separating, of the uniting ocean, was founded on that New Testament, the folios of which, I believe, are still preserved in Corpus Christi College in Cambridge, and in the Bodleian Library at Oxford. Here is the basis of what

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has been the grandest, most illustrious, and most prophetic, in the recent history of mankind. Give the gospel freedom and it will everywhere show this power. Among the children and youth to whom it goes, among the mature and the strong, wheresoever it goes, it grapples conscience, it stimulates the heart. That one sentence, "The blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth us from all sin," is the profoundest truth, is the most persuasive and commanding appeal, ever addrest by an inspired apostle to the children of mankind; and wherever that is heard, sin is lost in penitence, and hope is lost in triumphant vision, and the glory of the world disappears before the glory immutable of the Son of God!

Then we are to remember, certainly never is this to be forgotten, that the great imperishable motive, surpassing and dominating every other in missionary effort, is adoring love toward Christ, as central in the Scripture, glorified in history. No student of history, no observer of human experience, can fail to see that there is the sovereign passion possible to human nature; beside which the passion of love for a friend, for a country, for a business, for studies, may be auxiliary, but must be subordinate. There is the passion which has done the grandest things the world has ever known. There is the passion the vision of which interprets to us the strangest, sublimest pages of history. We have all felt

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it, I am sure, if we are Christian, in our measure, and at times; at the sacrament, perhaps; in those sabbaths of the soul of which Coleridge speaks, when the mind eddies instead of flowing onward; when we have been moved to a great effort for Him whom we love; most keenly, perhaps, when we have been in keenest sorrow, when the earth was as iron under our feet and the heavens as brass above our head, and we were all alone, yet not alone, for there stood beside us One in the form of the Son of Man, making luminous the dark! We have felt this love toward Christ; and when we have felt it we have known that no power could surpass or approach it in the intensity of its moving force, to every enterprise, great, difficult howsoever it might be, by which He would be honored.

Love has been the sovereign power in all the Church. Judgment may be generous; love is lavish. Judgment may be stedfast in its conclusions; love is heroic in its affirmations. It was love that garnished the house, and poured out the spikenard, and spiced the sepulcher. It was love that faced the flames, as in Felicitas and Perpetua, fronting the dungeon and not shrinking, fronting the sword and not blanching. It was love that said, "The nearer the sword, the nearer to God." You can not conquer that power, indestructible, full of a divine energy.

And with the experience of this comes the

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vivid vision of the divine Providence, working for the gospel in human history. How wonderful it is! Look at the progress of the last ninety years, since missionary work began in this country! The changes, except as they are matters of public record and of universal personal observation, would be simply unthinkable—the vast new machineries of travel and of commerce; the incalculable additions to the wealth of civilized lands; the ever-increasing prosperity and power of Protestant nations, in which the gospel is honored; the equally ever-reduced power and lessening fame of nations, ancient and famous, in which the gospel is refused free movement with a home among the people; the continually closer approaches of civilized and Protestant nations to each other, as of Great Britain and this country. Many years ago Lord Brougham said, you remember, "Not an ax falls in the American forest but it sets in motion a shuttle in Manchester." That has been true ever since, and is more true to-day than ever before. Not a mine is opened, not an industry established, not a mechanism invented in the one country, which is not recognized, and the power of which is not felt, in the other; and more and more their policies are weaving together, not necessarily in form, but in fundamental, underlying sympathy. All these things are going forward with the opening of regions and realms formerly inaccessible

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to Christianity; so that now the Christianity which seemed buried in the catacombs, which seemed burned up in the martyr fires, has the freedom of the world, and may everywhere be preached in its purity and its power. Here are the plans of God going forward; and we ought to feel in ourselves that in every hardest work we do we are only keeping step with the march of omnipotence.

I know that there are many who fear that the prosperity of our times, the love of pleasure, the desire for ease and enjoyment, are to interfere with and stay these plans of the divine Providence for the furtherance of Christ's Church, and of His cause in the world. I do not wonder at the fear, though I do not share it. Unquestionably the secular spirit is more intense and widely distributed at this time than it ever was before, and the opportunities for its gratification, in the acquirement of wealth and in the enjoyment of every luxury, are greater than ever before. Undoubtedly it is true that Sunday observance is far less strict, and family discipline and training far less careful, than they were, perhaps, in the days of our own childhood. Sunday newspapers make almost all American ministers wish they were Englishmen; and Sunday observance among ourselves reminds one too often of that colloquy between Joshua and Moses as they were coming down from the mount during the idol-feast, when the

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younger said, "There is a noise of war in the camp." "No," said the elder and more discerning, "it is not the voice of them that shout for the mastery, neither is it the voice of them that cry for being overcome, but it is the voice of them that sing, that I hear." Sometimes in our congregations I think it is not the shout for the mastery of the truth, pushing it upon men, it is not the voice of them that cry, in penitence and humble obedience, because they are overcome, but it is the voice of them that sing that we hear; and the singing is too often in operatic measures, and done by quartets, not by congregations! Talleyrand was right in saying years ago that Americans take their pleasures sadly. I think that we are right also, and more nearly right, when we say that Americans take their religion too lightly, too gaily, as if it were a varnish upon life instead of a fire and power within it.

But the human soul is still beating, and full of life, in the heart of everyone whom we address; and God's gospel has its grip on that human soul whenever it reaches it through our ministry, lifts it nearer the things supernal, and nearer God Himself. While I see many things to make us solicitous, I see nothing to make us timid, concerning these mighty advancing plans of God. If persecution could not stay them, if prelacy could not finally thwart them, I do not believe that bicycles are

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going to override them, in the end, or that they are to find their grave in the fascinating golf links. No! there is One who sitteth above the circle of the earth, and the inhabitants thereof are as grasshoppers; and His plans go forth, soundless, silent, except as they come into operation. But they never are broken; they never are drawn back; and the world has to learn more and more clearly, every century, that the banners of God are those which never go down in any struggle, and that whoever walks and works with God is sure of the triumph.

Then do not let us forget that this is the sublime interval in history between the ascension of the Master and His second coming in power and glory, to judge the world! "In a grand and awful time" the hymn says—and I repeat it:

> "We are living, we are dwelling,
> In a grand and awful time,"

when the heavens have been luminous with the splendor of the ascension, and are destined to be luminous again with the awful glory of the coming for judgment; and now is our time for work—for work with the energy of the divine Spirit whose dispensation this is. That Spirit wrote His gospel by the inspiration of human minds, and by the instruments of human hands, on leaves of parchment and papyrus. He is writing His

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gospel now, at large, through His inspiration of human minds and guidance of human hands over the expanses of the continents. But it is the same gospel—the gospel of sin, the gospel of atonement, the gospel of regeneration, the gospel of future judgment, and of future glory for the believing. That is the gospel; and we are to go with Him in extending the knowledge of that and in writing it ourselves. Wheresoever we have the opportunity, that is our work; a work greater, more momentous, wider in its relations, than any other done upon the earth.

Let us not forget then the meanness, the misery and evilness, of human society, where the gospel does not enter and pervade it. Let us not forget the recoverableness to God of every person and every people, if the divine energies are rightly used. Let us not forget that the gospel of Christ is the power at which men laugh and say, "You are trying to quarry mountains with sunbeams; you are trying to lift masses of masonry with aerial or, at best, with silken threads." It is the gospel of Christ which is to be the power to lift mankind, and glorify God, on all the continents, in all the earth. The passion of love for Christ, stimulated by everything that we read or hear, quickened by the Spirit in our hearts, is the power that is to loosen amassed wealth and make it fluent, that is to vitalize dead wealth and make it active, that is to

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enter into every languid heart and inspire it for service. And then the view of the divine Providence working in history toward one result, steadily steering toward one haven and port,—the earth renewed in righteousness and beautiful before God; and then this dispensation of the Spirit, in which we have our time! After the resurrection, a disciple said, "I go a-fishing." Likewise said they all. It seems strange that even after that miracle, which has shot its radiance everywhere upon the history of the world, any disciple should have yielded to such an impulse. But now shall we, after the ascension and when the skies are still glowing with it, after Pentecost has opened heavenly principalities and powers to our view and our experience, under the shadow of the great white throne that is to be set in heaven—shall we go to building and bargaining, to mining and merchandising, as our chief aim in life, and omit this sublimest service which angels, it seems to me, must bend above the battlements of heaven to see in its progress, and to make their hearts and harps jubilant in its vitality and success?

Oh, my friends, let us remember, wheresoever we labor, that our errand is to make this complex, complete, energetic missionary motive more clear to every mind, more thoroughly vigorous and energetic in every heart. Everything else must be postponed! Do not

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let us spend our strength in picking the gospel to pieces, to see if we can't put it together again in a better fashion! Do not let us spend our strength in any denominational controversies or collisions. Let us give ourselves, with all our power, to making this immense missionary motive operative throughout all the churches, throughout and in all Christian hearts; till He shall come whose right it is to reign, and take unto Himself His great power, and rule, King of nations as well as King of saints. Let us recognize this as the one truly magnificent errand for man on the earth. Let us be filled with the Divine Spirit, that we may accomplish it the more perfectly. Let us never intermit the service. And if, as we grow older, we grow weary with cares and labors, and it may be with sorrows, and are disposed sometimes to think we may now rest, let us remember the word of Arnauld, the illustrious Port Royalist, whom even his passionate enemies, the Jesuits, admitted to be great, of whom it is recorded that when some one said to him, "You have labored long, now is your time to rest!" his reply was, "Rest? Why rest, here and now, when I have a whole eternity to rest in?" God in His grace open that tranquil and luminous eternity to each of us, where we may find rest in nobler praise and grander work, forevermore; and unto Him be all the praise!

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PUNSHON

ZEAL IN THE CAUSE OF CHRIST

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BIOGRAPHICAL NOTE

WILLIAM MORLEY PUNSHON, English Methodist divine, was born at Doncaster, in Yorkshire, in 1824. His style was brilliant and elaborate, and while his sermons were written out in the minutest detail and carefully committed to memory, they were delivered with a freshness and vigor that rivaled the charm of extemporaneous eloquence. Every word he uttered was charged with the force and vitality of his great personality. At the Metropolitan Church, Toronto, Canada, he preached for many years, drawing thousands of people to Christ by the zeal, magnetism and power of his pulpit oratory. He died in 1881.

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PUNSHON

1824—1881

ZEAL IN THE CAUSE OF CHRIST

For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God: or whether we be sober, it is for your cause. For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they who live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them, and rose again.—2 Cor. v., 13-15.

It is always an advantage for the advocate of any particular cause to know the tactics of his adversary. He will be the better prepared for the onset, and repel the attack the more easily. Forewarned of danger, he will intrench himself in a position from which it will be impossible to dislodge him. The apostle Paul possest this advantage in a very eminent degree. In the earlier years of his apostleship, the Jew and the Greek were the antagonists with whom he had to contend. Having been himself a member of the straitest sect of the Jews, he knew full well the antipathy with which they regarded anything which set itself by its simplicity in contrast with their magnificent ritual; and he knew also the haughty scorn with

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which they turned away from what they deemed the unworthy accessories of the Nazarene. And, well read as he was in classic literature, and acquainted with all the habits and tendencies of the Grecian mind, he could readily understand how the restraints of the gospel would be deemed impertinent by the voluptuous Corinthian, and how the philosophic Athenian would brand its teachers mad. And yet, rejoicing in the experimental acquaintance with the gospel, he says, for his standing-point of advantage: "We preach Christ crucified, to the Jews a stumbling-block and to the Greeks foolishness, but to them that are called, the power of God and the wisdom of God." And in the words of the text, addressing some of those very Corinthians upon whom the gospel had exerted its power, he seems to accept the stigma and vindicate the glorious madness: "For whether we be beside ourselves, it is to God: or whether we be sober it is for your cause. For the love of Christ constraineth us; because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead; and that he died for all, that they who live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who died for them, and rose again." The great purpose of the apostle in these words is to impress upon us the fact that the cause of Christ in the world, sanctioned by the weight of so many obligations, fraught with the destinies of so many

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millions, should be furthered by every legitimate means; that for it, if necessary, should be employed the soberest wisdom; and for it, if necessary, the most impassioned zeal. He vindicates the use of zeal in the cause of Christ by the three following considerations: First, from the condition of the world; secondly, from the obligations of the Church; and, thirdly, from the master-motive of the Savior's constraining love. To illustrate and enforce this apostolic argument, as not inappropriate to the object which has called us together, will be our business for a few brief moments to-night.

I. The apostle argues and enforces the use of zeal in the cause of Christ, in the first place, from the condition of the world. The apostle speaks of the world as in a state of spiritual death. He argues the universality of this spiritual death from the universality of the atonement of Christ. "For the love of Christ constraineth us, because we thus judge, that if one died for all, then were all dead"—dead in sin, with every vice luxuriant and every virtue languishing; dead in law, judicially in the grasp of the avenger; nay, "condemned already," and hastening to the second death. We need not remind you that this is by no means the world's estimate of its own condition. It is short-sighted, and, therefore, self-complacent. There is a veil over its eye; there is a delusion at its heart.

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In that delusion it fancies itself enthroned and stately, like some poor lunatic, an imaginary monarch under the inflictions of its keeper. The discovery of its true position comes only when the mind is enlightened from on high. "We thus judge," not because there is in us any intuitional sagacity, or any prophetical foresight, by which our judgment is made more accurate than the judgment of others; but the Holy Spirit has come down, has wrought upon us—has shown us the plague of our own hearts—and from the death within us we can the better argue the death which exists around. And that this is the actual condition of the world, Scripture and experience combine to testify. The Bible, with comprehensive impartiality, concludes all "under sin"; represents mankind as a seed of evil-doers—"children that are corrupters"—sheep that have wandered away from the Shepherd and Bishop of their souls. In the adjudication of Scripture there is no exemption from this common character of evil, and from this common exposure to danger. The men of merciful charities, and the woman of abandoned life—the proudest peer, and the vilest serf in his barony—the moralist observer of the decalogue, and the man-slayer, red with blood, all are comprehended in the broad and large denunciation: "Ye were by nature children of wrath, even as others." And out in the broad world, wherever the

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observant eye travels, you have abundant confirmation of the testimony of Scripture. You have it in your own history. The transgressions and sins which constitute this moral death abound in our age no less than in any former age of mankind. There are thousands around you who revel in undisguised corruption. There are thousands more externally reputable who have only a name to live. You have this confirmation in the nations of the Continent—some safely bound by the superstition of ages; others subsiding into a reactionary skepticism. You have this confirmation further away in the countries which own Mohammedan rule, and cherish the Mohammedan's dream—where you have unbridled lust, and a tiger's thirst for blood. You have this confirmation in the far-off regions of heathenism proper, where the nature, bad in itself, is made a thousand fold worse by its religion—where the man is the prey of every error, and the heart the slave of every cruelty—where men live in destruction, and where men die in despair. Travel where you will, visit the most distant regions, and search under the shadow of the highest civilization—penetrate into the depths of those primeval forests, into whose original darkness you might have imagined the curse would hardly penetrate, and the result is uniformly the same. Death is everywhere. You see it, indeed, in all its varieties now in the rare and

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fading beauty which it wears just after the spirit has fled from the clay, when its repose seems the worn-out casket, which the soul has broken, and thrown away; now, when there is shed over it a hue of the sublime, and it is carried amid the tears to burial, and now, when corruption has begun its work, and its ill odor affects the neighborhood, and spreads the pestilence—you see it in all its varieties, but uniformly death is there. We gather from our melancholy pilgrimage no vestige of spiritual life. Mourners go about the streets, and there are mourners over many tombs.

Altho, as we have observed just now, a thorough and realizing estimate of the world's condition comes only when the judgment is enlightened from on high, the wise men of the world, the minds that have in all ages towered above their fellows, have felt an unsatisfactoriness for which they could hardly account; they have had a vague and morbid consciousness that all was not right somehow, either with themselves or with their race; they have met with disturbing forces, signs of irregularity, tokens of misery and of sin that have ruffled, somewhat, the philosophic evenness of their minds. Each in his own way, and from his own standpoint, has guessed at the solution of the problem, and has been ready with a suggested remedy. The peoples are imbruted; educate them. The nations are barbarous; civilize them. Men grovel in sen-

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sual pleasure; cultivate the esthetic faculty; open to them galleries of pictures; bring them under the humanizing influences of art. Men groan in bondage; emancipate them, and bid them be free! Such are some of the tumultuous cries that have arisen from earnest but blind philanthropists, who have ignored the spiritual part of man's nature, and forgotten altogether the Godward relations of his soul. All these, as might have been expected, valuable enough as auxiliaries, worth something to promote the growth and comfort of a man when life has been once imparted, fail, absolutely fail to quicken the unconscious dead. In all cases the bed has been shorter than that a man could lie on it, and the covering narrower than that he could wrap himself in it. The inbred death lay too deep for such superficial alchemy; corpses can not by any possibility animate corpses; and the compassionate bystander from other worlds, sickened with the many inventions, might be constrained to cry, "Amid all this tumult of the human, O for something divine!" And the divine is given—Christ has died for all men. There is hope for the world's life. This is a death whereby we live; this is a remedy commensurate with existing need, and intended entirely to terminate and extinguish that need.

That squalid savage, whose creed is a perpetual terror, and whose life is a perpetual

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war—Christ hath died for him. That fettered and despairing slave, into whose soul the iron has entered, valued by his base oppressor about on a par with the cattle he tends, or with the soil he digs—Christ hath died for him. That dark blasphemer, who lives in familiar crime, whose tongue is set on fire of hell, whose expatriation would be hailed by the neighborhood around him as a boon of chiefest value—Christ has died for him. That dark recluse, whom an awakened conscience harasses, and who, in the vain hope of achieving merit by suffering, wastes himself with vigilant penance well-nigh to the grave—Christ has died for him. Oh, tell these tidings to the world, and it will live. Prophesy of this name in the motionless valley, and the divine Spirit who always waits to do honor to Jesus will send the afflatus from the four winds of heaven, and they shall leap into life to His praise.

Now take these two points. Think in the first place, of the condition of the world—a condition so disastrous, that nothing but death can illustrate it—a condition which prostrates every faculty, which smites the body with unnumbered cruelties, which dwarfs the mind with prejudices or distorts it into unholy passion, which banishes the soul and mind within a man in hopeless estrangement from happiness and God; and then think of the death of Christ, providing for the furthest need,

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overtaking the utmost exile, pouring its abundant life upon the sepulchered nations, diffusing light, liberty, hope, comfort, heaven: and I appeal to your enlightened judgment whether you are not bound, those of you who believe in Jesus, to labor for the world's conversion with intensest energy and zeal. Oh, if temporal miseries elicit sympathy, and prompt to help; if the anxieties of a neighborhood gather around a drowning child, or are fastened upon the rafters of a burning house, where, solitary and imploring, stands a single man, already charred by the flame, how much of sympathy, of effort, of liberality, of zeal, of prayer, are due to a world lying in the wicked one, and panting after the second death! You will agree with me, that there is more than license for the poet's words:

> "On such a theme,
> 'Tis impious to be calm!"

And you will rejoice—will you not? to take your stand to-night by the apostle's side, and to cry, when men deem your zeal impertinence and your efforts fanaticism, "If we be beside ourselves, it is to God: and if we be sober, it is for your cause."

II. The apostle argues the necessity for zeal in the cause of Christ, secondly, from the obligations of the Church, in that He died for all, that they should live—should not henceforth live unto themselves, but for Him

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who died for them and rose again. The apostle's argument is this—none of us has life in himself; if we live at all, we live by imparted life; we live because life has been drafted into our spirits from on high. Then it is not our own; it belongs to Him who has purchased it for us with His own blood, and we are bound to employ it in His service, and for His glory. This also is the conclusion of an enlightened judgment. We judge this as well as the other, and this is in accordance with the whole tenor of Scripture. Time would fail us to mention a tithe of the passages in which devotion—the devotion of the heart and of the service of God are made matter of constant and of prominent demand. I will just mention one passage that may serve as an illustration of all: "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye give your bodies as a living sacrifice." Have you ever gaged the depth of consecration that slumbers in the heart of those words —"a living sacrifice"; to be absolutely and increasingly devoted to God, as if the knife were at the throat, and the life-blood streamed forth in votive offering? Nay, better than that; because the life-blood could stream out but once, but the living sacrifice may be a perpetual holocaust, repeated daily for a lifetime—a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. From the doctrine of this passage, and of

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numberless others kindred to it, it would appear that the regenerate heart is not at liberty to live for itself, nor to aim supremely at its own gratification; it must live for Him who has died for it, and who has risen again. You can not fail, I think, to perceive that compliance with this exhortation is utterly antagonistic to the ordinary procedure of mankind.

In the age of organization against idolatry, there is one proud, rampant idolatry which retains its ascendency amongst us. Selfishness is the most patronized idolatry in the world. It is the great image whose brightness is exceeding terrible, and before which all men bow; it is a throne, and an empire, and the likeness of a kingly crown; it equips armies and mans armaments to gratify its lust of power. Fastnesses have been explored and caverns ransacked to appease its thirst for gold. It presides over the councils of kings and over the diplomacy of cabinets; for it the merchantman grindeth down his manhood, for it the treader-under-foot of nations marcheth in his might and in his shame; its votaries are of all handicrafts—of the learned professions, and of every walk in life. It hath sometimes climbed on to the judgment-seat, and perverted justice there. The cowled monk hath hidden it beneath his robe, and it hath become for him an engine of oppression, and it hath occasionally robed

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itself in holy vestments, and entered the priest's office for a morsel of bread. No grace or virtue of humanity is free from its contamination. It has breathed, and patriotism has degenerated into partisanship; it has breathed, and friendship has been simulated for policy; it has breathed, and charity has been blemished by ostentation; it has breathed, and religion has been counterfeited for gold; its sway is a despotism—its territory wherever man hath trodden, and it is the undisputed anarch of the world. Now it is against this principle in human nature, throned within us all, doggedly contesting every inch of ground, that Christianity goes forth to combat. The gospel absolutely refuses to allow self to be the governing power, and assaults it in all its strongholds with precepts of sublime morality. To the selfishness of avarice it goes up boldly, even while the miser clutches his gold, and says: "Give to him that asketh of thee, and from him that would borrow of thee turn not thou away." To the selfishness of anger it addresses itself, even when the red spot is yet on the brow of the angry: "Let not the sun go down upon thy wrath"; "Bless them that curse you, pray for them that despitefully use you and persecute you." To the selfishness of pride, even in its haughtiness and arrogance, it says: "In honor preferring one another, be clothed with humility, let each esteem another better

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than himself." To the selfishness of indifference to the concerns of others, "Look not on thine own things, but likewise upon the things of others"; and to the selfishness of souls and criminal neglect of the great salvation, it speaks in tones of pathos which that must be a callous heart that can withstand, "Ye know the graces of our Lord Jesus Christ, who, tho he was rich, yet for our sins he became poor, that we, through his poverty, might be made rich." Oh, how small, alongside of august and heavenly precepts like these, are the sublimest maxims of any merely ethical morality!

It is said that, once, during the performance of a comedy in the Roman theater, one of the actors gave utterance to the sentiment, "I am a man; nothing, therefore, that is human can be foreign to me," and the audience were so struck by the disinterestedness, or so charmed by the novelty, that they greeted it with thunders of applause. How much greater wealth of kindly wisdom and prompting to unselfish action lies hidden in the gospel of Christ, shrined there as every-day utterances passed by the most of us very slightingly by! Oh! let there be anything like the genial practise of this divine morality, and the world would soon lose its aspect of desolation and of blood; oppression and over-reaching, and fraud and cruelty, would be frowned out of the societies of men, and this earth would be

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once more an ample and a peopled paradise. By selfishness, as we have thus endeavored to describe it, we mean that grasping, monopolizing spirit which gets all and gives nothing; heedful enough of its own fortunes, careless of the concerns and interests of others. This is the principle in our nature which Christianity opposes, and with which it ceaselessly wages war. But there is a sort of selfishness which, for the sake of distinction, we may call self-love, which is instinctive, and therefore innocent—that merciful provision by which we are prompted to the care of our own lives and to the avoidance of everything that would disquiet or abridge them. This principle in our nature Christianity encourages; to this principle Christianity addresses itself; and hence it has connected, married in indissoluble union, man's chiefest duty and man's highest pleasure. Godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is. What has the dark, morbid, unhappy sensualist to do with it? Godliness hath the promise of the life "that now is," as well as "that which is to come." In keeping Thy commandments there is a present reward. "Take my yoke upon you and learn of me, for I am meek and lowly in heart, and ye shall find rest unto your souls; for my yoke is easy and my burden is light." "In thy presence there is fulness of joy; at thy right hand there are pleasures for ever-

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more." Just as it is in man's physical organization, and its adaptation to the material world around him, when body and mind are alike in health, we can neither eat, nor drink, nor walk, nor sleep, nor sing, nor perform any of the commonest actions of life without a sensation of pleasure; so it is in the spiritual life: there is pleasure in its every motion. There is pleasure even in the sting of penitence; it is

> "A godly grief and pleasing smart,
> That melting of a broken heart."

There is pleasure in the performance of duty; there is pleasure in the enjoyment of privilege; there is pleasure in the overcoming of temptations, a grand thrill of happiness to see trampled under foot a vanquished lust or slain desire; there is pleasure in the exercise of benevolence; there is pleasure in the importunity of prayer. Hence it is that the apostle seeks to rivet the sense of personal obligation by the remembrance of personal benefit. "We thus judge, that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him who"—owns them? No. Claims them? No. Will judge them? No; but—"to him who died for them and rose again." Gratitude is to be the best prompter to our devotion. Those who live to Christ, those who live by Christ, will not tamely see His altars forsaken, His

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Sabbaths desecrated, His name blasphemed, the blood of the covenant wherewith He was sanctified accounted an unholy thing. Brethren, are you of that happy family? Have you obtained life from the dead through His name? Then you are bound to spend it for His honor, and, watching with godly jealousy for every possible opportunity of doing good, to spend and be spent for them who have not yet your Master known. I call on you to answer this invocation; it belongs to you. There is no neutrality, believe me, in this war—and if there be some of you that would like to be dastardly and half-hearted trimmers, you will find by and by that you have got the hottest place in the battle, exposed to the cross-fire from the artillery of both parties. I call on you decisively to-night to answer this invocation. Call up before your minds the benefits you have individually received; think of the blessings which the death of Christ has procured for you—the removal of the blighting curse which shadowed all your life, the present sense of pardon, mastery over self and over sin, light in the day of your activity, and songs in the night of your travail; the teaching Spirit to lead you into still loftier knowledge, and the sanctifying Spirit to impress upon you the image of the heavenly; that divine fellowship which lightens the present, and that majestic hope which makes the future brighter far. Think of the

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benefits which the resurrection of Christ has conferred upon you; light in the shadowed valley, the last enemy destroyed, support amid the swellings of Jordan, a guide upon the hither side of the flood, angelic welcomes, the King in his beauty, and "a house not made with hands, eternal in the heavens." And then, as the sum of favor is presented, and gratitude arises and the fire burns, and the heart is full, and the frame quivers with the intensity of its emotions, just remember that there is a world lying in the wicked one, that there are multitudes, thousands upon thousands, in your own city, at your own doors, for whom the Savior died, who never heard His name; that there are multitudes for whom He has abolished death who have never felt His resurrection's power. Let your tears flow; better, far better a tear for God's sake and the world's sake than the hard-heartedness and darkness of sin. Lift up your voice in the midst of them; lift it up, be not afraid. Say unto the cities of Judah, "Behold your God." Men will call you mad, but you can give them the apostle's answer, "If we be beside ourselves, it is to God; if we be sober, it is for your cause."

III. The apostle argues the necessity of zeal in the cause of Christ, in the third place, from the master motive of the Savior's constraining love. "The love of Christ constraineth us" —forces us along, carries us away as with the

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impetuosity of a torrent, or rather as when cool heavens and favoring air speed the vessel steadily to the haven. Love is at once man's most powerful motive and his highest inspiration, both in the life that now is and that which is to come. From love to Christ spring the most devoted obedience, the most untiring efforts in His service. There are other springs of action, I know, by which men are influenced to a profession of religion. Interest can occasionally affect godliness from sordid aims, and behave itself decorously amid the respectabilities of the temple-going and almsgiving religion; but it will give its arm to any man that goes down to the house of Rimmon; and if there is a decree that at the sound of all kinds of music they are to fall down before another image which has been erected in the plains of Dura, they will be the most obsequious benders of the knee. Men sometimes practise obedience under the influence of fear. A sudden visitation, a prevailing epidemic, an alarming appeal, will strike into momentary concern; but when the indignation is overpast, and the craven soul has recovered from its paroxysms of terror, there will often be a relapse into more than the former atrocities of evil. Convictions of duty may and sometimes will induce a man, like an honest Pharisee of the olden time, to observe rigidly the enactments of the law; but there will be no heart in his obedience, and no holy passion

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in his soul; but let the love of God be shed abroad in his heart by the Holy Ghost given unto him, let there be a perception of love in God, let there be sight of the Crucified as well as of the cross, and there will be disinterested, and cheerful, and hearty obedience. Zeal for God will become at once a passion and a principle, intensifying every purpose into ardor, and filling the whole soul with vehemence of absorbing desire. This is the emotion from whose natural and inevitable outflow the apostle vindicates impassioned zeal.

Opinions are divided as to whether the constraining love spoken of in the text refers to Christ's love to us or to our love to Him, which the sense of His love has enkindled in the soul. I do not think we can go far wrong if we take both meanings, inasmuch as no principle of exposition is violated, and as we need the pressure of a combination of motive, that we may be zealously affected always in this good thing. Ye, then, if there are any of you here who need rousing to energy in the service of Christ, think of His love to you; how rich its manifestations, and how unfeigned; how all other love of which it is possible for you to conceive shrinks in the comparison! There have been developments in the histories of years of self-sacrificing affection, which has clung to the loved object amid hazard and suffering, and which has been ready even to offer up life in its behalf.

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Orestes and Pylades, Damon and Pythias, David and Jonathan, what lovely episodes their histories give us amid a history of selfishness and sin! Men have canonized them, partly because such instances are rare, and partly because they are like a dim hope of redemption looming from the ruins of the fall. We have it on inspired authority, indeed, "Greater love hath no man than this" —this is the highest point which man can compass, this is the culminating point of that affection which man can by possibility attain, the apex of his loftiest pyramid goes no higher than this—"greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friend; but God commendeth his love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners Christ died for us." A brother has sometimes made notable efforts to retrieve a brother's fortunes, or to blanch his sullied honor; but there is a Friend that sticketh closer than a brother. A father has bared his breast to shield his offspring from danger, and a mother would gladly die for the offspring of her womb; but a father's affection may fail in its strength, and yet more rarely a mother's in its tenderness.

And "can a woman forget her sucking child, that she should not have compassion on the son of her womb? Yea, they may forget, yet will I not forget thee." O Jesus of Nazareth, who can declare Thee? "Herein is love, not

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that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be a propitiation for our sins." Think of that love—love which desertion could not abate—love which ingratitude could not abate—which treachery could not abate—love which death could not destroy—love which, for creatures hateful and hating one another, stooped to incarnation, and suffered want, and embraced death, and shrank not even from the loathesomeness and from the humiliation of burial; and then, with brimming eye, and heart that is full of wonder: "Why such love to me?" you will indeed be ungrateful if you are not stirred by it to an energy of consecration and endeavor, which may well seem intemperate zeal to cool reckoners with worldly wisdom.

Then take the other side of the argument; take it as referring to your love to Christ, which the sense of His love has enkindled in the soul. The deepest affection in the believing heart will always be the love of Jesus. The love of home, the love of friends, the love of letters, the love of rest, the love of travel, and all else, are contracted by the side of this master passion. "A little deeper," said one of the veterans of the first Napoleon's old guard, when they were probing in his bosom for a bullet that had mortally wounded him, and he thought they were getting somewhere in the region of the heart—"a little deeper and you will find the Em-

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peror." Engraven on the Christian's heart deeper than all other love of home or friends, with an ineffaceable impression that nothing can erase, you find the loved name of Jesus. Oh! let this affection impel us, and who shall measure our diligence or repress our zeal? Love is not bound by rule; there is no law that can bind it; it is never below the precept, it is always up to the precept, but it always has a margin of its own. It does not calculate, with mathematical exactitude, with how little of obedience it can escape penalty and secure recompense; like its Master it gives in princely style; it is exuberant in its manifestations; there is always enough and to spare. And if meaner motive can prompt to heroic action—if from pure love of science astronomers can cross the ocean familiarly, and dare encounter dangers, just that they may watch in distant climes the transit of a planet across the disc of the sun—and if botanists can travel into inhospitable climes and sojourn among inhospitable men, only to gather specimens of their gorgeous flora—and if, with no motive but love of country, and no recompense save bootless tears and an undying name, a Willoughby could sacrifice himself to blow up a magazine, and a Sarkeld could fire the Cashmere Gate at Delhi, surely we, with obligations incomparably higher, with the vows of profession on our lips, with death busy in the midst of us, and souls going down

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from our doors into a joyless and blasted immortality, ought to present our life-blood, if need be, for the cause of Christ, and for the good of souls. Let the scoffers spurn at us as they will; we are far superior to such poor contumely. Heaven applauds our enthusiasm, and we vindicate it in the apostle's words: "If we be beside ourselves, it is to God; and if we be sober, it is for your cause."

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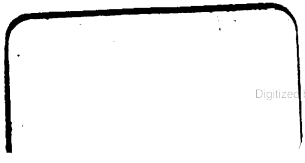
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